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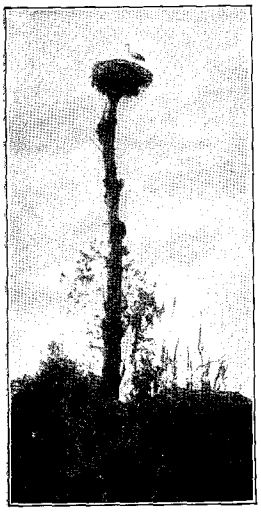
THE AUTOMOBILE IN AFRICA

BY SIR HENRY NORMAN, M. P.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR



The stork's nest by the wayside.

To two people who have learned what the possession of an automobile may mean, the year, apart from its daily duties and its daily dust, is divided into three parts: One, the anticipation; two, the execution; three, the retrospect, of its motor journey. No other event of their year, again, of course, excepting grave affairs of public and private life, demands so much delightful preparation, brings so much keen enjoyment, imparts so much solid knowledge, affords so much precious memory as the month or two they spend together upon the flowing road. The world is theirs—wherever it is civilized enough to have roads. All races may become their intimates, every range of mountain-peaks their companion, every river their winding guide, every historic civilization their atmosphere. Vine-land and pine-land, palm-land and snow-land, the hot plain and the cold *col*, the comfortable certainty and the untried adventure—which shall it be this time? So from the long discussions on winter evenings—first, the wide expanse of the small scale map, then the puzzles of the large scale, then the study of topography, of climate, of history—at last the decision, made, unmade, remade, a dozen times, emerges final and fascinating. Then one of us sets to work on books and maps (with intervals of hats and frocks), while the other dons his overalls every afternoon and riots in a fortnight of mechanics, till each single part of the car has been separately handled and approved, scraped and replaced, adjusted or repaired, and the machine is perfect at every point for its task, with everything on board for anything that may happen.

Whither, then, this year? The answer is a word of purple promise. To the south, to a continent almost unknown to the motorist, to the land of the camel and the palm, to the desert and the oasis, to the Garden of Allah—to Africa! "Si l'on demande où je vais, tu répondras que je suis en Afrique: c'est un mot magique qui prête aux conjectures, et qui fait rêver les amateurs de découvertes." So we drove in four December days across France, from Havre to Marseilles, and thence took ship to Algiers.

When in the brief chronicle of a long automobile journey one comes to an historic city, the result must be an impression, not a description. This is fortunate for me in the case of Algiers, for almost all writers about it begin by saying that it cannot be described. The difficulty of the task may be judged from the vocabulary to which one enthusiastic French author has recourse, in a desperate effort to compass the impossible. "Peut-on décrire Alger? Quelle palette ne faudrait-il pas pour rendre le ton, la couleur, la chaleur des teintes, dont l'in-

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tensité est parfois presque douleureuse et dont les crépuscules rapides et ombreux et les aubes clarteuses font tièdes, douces, intermédiaires, les opalescences diaphanes, nimbées d'auréoles violettes ou bleutées?"*

The Arabs call Algiers *El Bahadja*, "The White," and compare it to a diamond set among emeralds. It appears to one writer like a quarry of rosy-veined white marble. Another sees in its rising terraces a giant's staircase. Fromentin, "the poet of the Sahara," compares the lonely cypress rising from its castle, where the Janissary has given way to the Zouave, to an aigrette upon a turban. The fact is that Algiers is a spectacle of extraordinary charm. Seen from the sea by night, when the mail-boat from Marseilles arrives, it is an amphitheatre of stars, with a great sparkling band —the lights along the modern Boulevard de la République, which cuts across the native city and forms the communication between old and new. In daylight it is seen to be a semicircle of terraces, rising from the deep blue of the sea to the deep green of the hills, beyond which again are the snow-tipped mountains, the dazzling white of the houses broken only by the exuberant tropical foliage, the modern suburb of Moustapha Supérieur on the left telling of Western luxury by its embowered villas, the old city wholly Eastern in its houses crushed together in the press of humanity, crowned by its famous citadel, the historic Kasbah, with its one tall aigrette cypress. The first view of Algiers, too, reveals the secret of its perfect climate. It lies wide open to the sun, a thousand miles south of Paris, with the sea before it to warm and refresh the cold, parching winds from the north, and the two Atlas ranges and the wooded Sahel behind it to cool the hot south wind from the Sahara.

The merely picturesque has few attractions for me. In my travels it is always the ghosts that move me. The walls of Constantinople live for me in the pages of Gibbon. In Central Asia I saw Skobeleff's army bombarding Khiva and himself going alone to the native bath an hour after he had passed as a conqueror through the corpse-strewn streets. Sofia was haunted by Stambuloff, for his wife showed me his chopped-off hands in a vessel of spirit. In Athens I remember the exquisite figures of the Panathenaic festival moving in stately procession round the Acropolis. I once went to Harper's Ferry to see John Brown and his sons, rifle in hand, holding the bridge. I know Richard Cœur de Lion chiefly through the wonderful Château Gaillard he built above the Seine, where I saw his men-at-arms carousing in the vast halls, and the ladies of his court leaning over the high battlements. I enjoy the snowy Alp, the rolling landscape, the scented gardens largely at second hand—in the pleasure of others, but *nihil humani a me alienum*. The places I seek and hold in memory are those where men have thought and fought and women have loved and sung and wept. I know just what the poet meant when he wrote:

> "The living are the only dead;
> The dead live, never more to die;
> And often when we mourn them fled
> They never were so nigh."

Any guide-book will tell you of the mosques of Algiers—there are but four, the others being *koubbas*, prayer-houses built round the tombs of Moslem saints. I will only say that the most beautiful thing in Algiers — apart from the old jewelry, if you are lucky enough to find it, and sharp enough not to be taken in by imitations—is the collection of tiles and plaques in the Zaouia of Sidi Abd-er-Rahman, who died in 1471. My lady readers will possibly like to look in at a woman's bath. I am assured it is a remarkable spectacle. The Kasbah, the citadel of 1516, mounted two hundred guns and had two million pounds' worth of treasure in its vaults, when the last Dey struck with his fan the French consul in the tawdry little painted wood summer-house above the court-yard—an act which made Algeria into a French department. And every writer is struck, as you will be, by the spectacle of East and West—the Arab in his *bournous* and the Maltese tramway driver, the Moor in his gay *gandoura* and the smart French officer, the veiled Arab woman, whose aim is to hide herself beneath her *haik* and swaddling-clothes, and the corsetted lady from the Champs Elysées, whose object is to exhibit herself, jostle each other in the streets of Algiers.

For my own part, I was almost stifled there by the throng of ghosts, and it seemed

*G. Saint-Paul, "Souvenirs de Tunisie et d'Algérie," p. 91.

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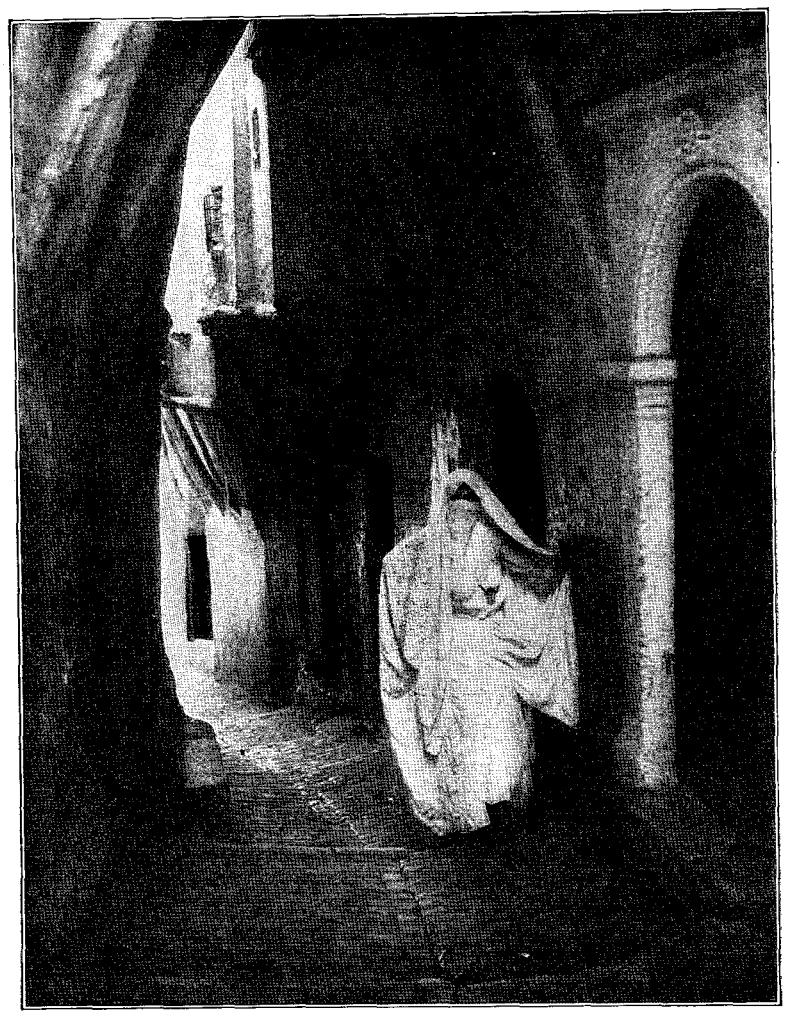

Photograph by Em. Frechon.

In mysterious Algiers.

as though I must push them aside before I could move. Has any other place so many? Lybians, Numidians, Phœnicians are too old to be recognized. The centuries of Roman conquest have left little beyond the name "Icosium" in an inscription in the rue Bab-Azzoun. Genseric, the Vandal, at the request of one of a pair of Roman rivals, seized all North Africa, afterward sacked Rome (A. D. 429), and then Rome avenged herself by ruining him through the luxury he had stolen from her, and from Constantinople came (A. D. 533) the Byzantine general, Belisarius, who took it all. But the European domination was doomed and the African Church, which had produced Tertullian, Cyprian, and the immortal Augustine, went down (A. D. 647) before the conquering host of the Kaliph Othman, and for thirteen centuries the followers of the prophet fought only amongst themselves for Africa, until the cup of iniquity overflowed in 1830, and the French began their African development by the conquest of Algiers. But the remarkable ghosts of the White City are those of the tens of thousands of Christian slaves—chiefly English, French, Spanish, Dutch, and American, and their pirate masters, who for centuries set Christian Europe, and later the United States, at defiance, and not only defied these nations, but at one time or another defeated them all.

Ships were seized in all European waters, even off the coast of Ireland, and their crews

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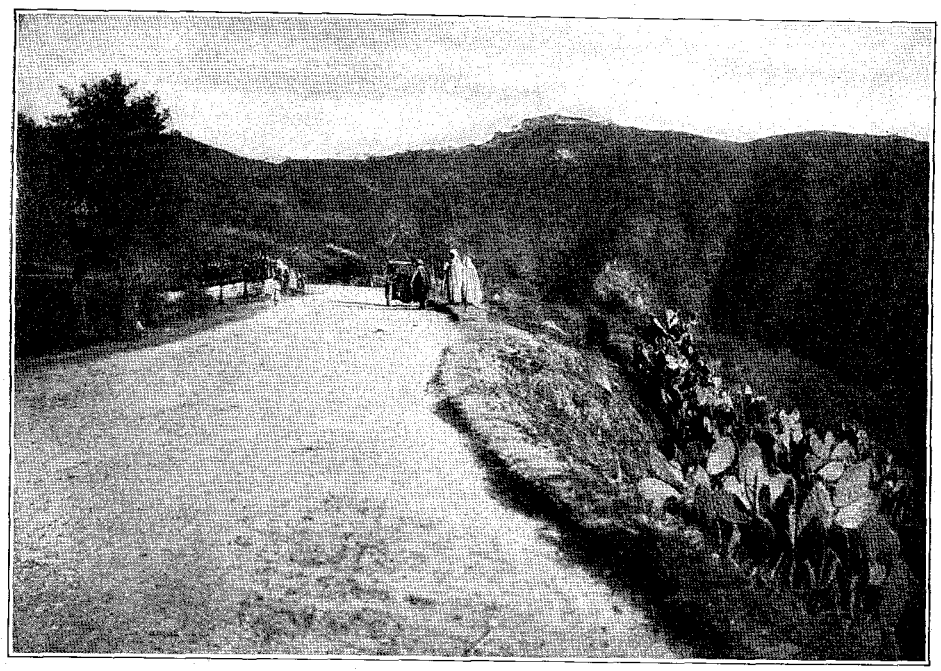

How France conquered Kabylia. The great road and Fort National.—Page 266.

taken into slavery. So were the crews of vessels which came to trade. When any State attempted punishment, the consul of that country was sent to the galleys, and Sir Lambert Playfair, British consul-general and erudite author of Murray's "Handbook," tells us that in one instance, on the approach of a French fleet, their representative was blown toward them from a mortar! Cervantes himself was a slave there in 1555. The British ambassador at Madrid wrote in 1616: "The strength and boldness of the Barbary pirates is now grown to that height, both in the ocean and the Mediterranean seas, as I have never known anything to have wrought a greater sadness and distraction than the daily advice thereof." In the seventeenth century the Algerine pirates held prizes worth twenty million francs. Again and again the Christian powers of that and the next century failed to inflict a lasting defeat upon this "scourge of Christendom." The British Parliament passed an Act to "undertake that Christian work of the redemption of the captives from the cruel thraldom they lay under," but its intention exceeded its power, for not long afterward three hundred and fifty English ships were captured and six thousand English slaves brought into Algiers in the space of seven years, and when, after five years' war between England and the pirate State, a peace was signed, the Dey refused to surrender a single English slave, and the treaty contained a clause to the effect that "the King of Great Britain shall not be obliged by virtue of this treaty to redeem any of his subjects now in slavery"—probably the most degrading treaty, as Sir Lambert Playfair remarks, ever signed between England and a foreign power. At one time forty thousand Christian slaves were in bondage in Algeria, of all the nations of Europe, many of them men of rank, learning, and piety, and all of them suffering daily the most cruel hardships, starvation, and torture. One would have expected the Christian nations to join forces for one object at least, and wipe this puny pirate State off the earth, yet for five hundred years Barbary held them at bay. Just as the old sailors' chanty about "the coast of the wild Barbaree" took its origin in the terrors of that coast, so the religious order of the Fathers of the Redemption was originally founded to collect alms for the ransom of the Algerian slaves, and many of its members, with perhaps the noblest Christian charity on record, voluntarily shared the lot of the

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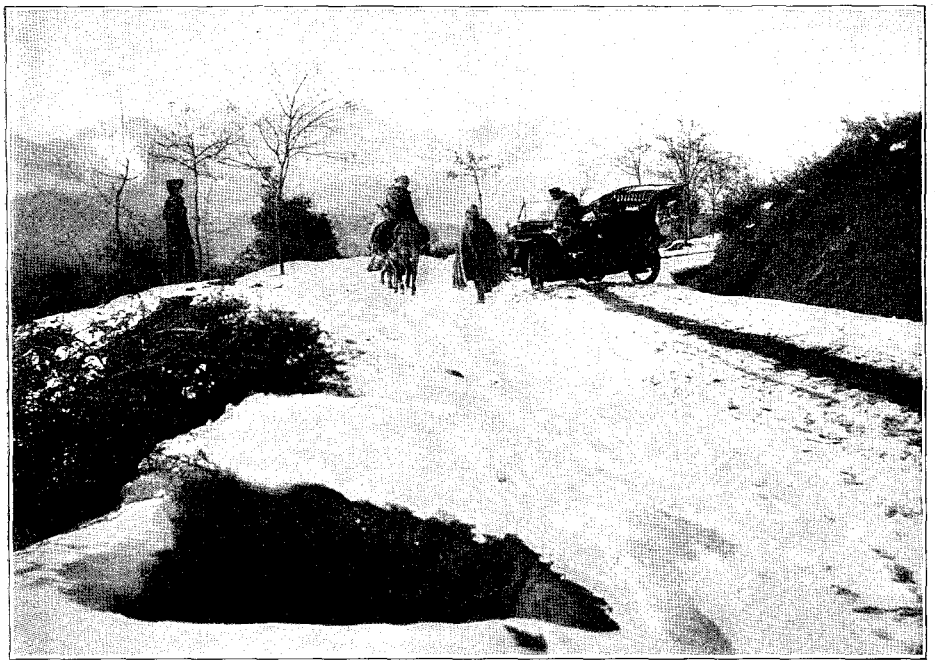

Stopped by snow in upper Kabylia.—Page 267.

captives for the comfort they could give, and the services they could render in negotiations of ransom.

One ghost of all these unhappy thousands takes literally concrete shape. An Arab Christian named Geronimo, taken as a baby by Spanish soldiers and educated by the vicar-general, was captured by the pirates during a raid. As a renegade he was of course the subject of the utmost persecution, and when no inducement or suffering could make him apostatize, he was at length offered by the Dey the choice of being thrown alive into a mould of concrete which formed part of the foundation of a new bastion, or of embracing Islam; he chose the martyrdom and was flung into the mould, with his hands tied behind him, and the concrete poured over him. This was in 1569.

In 1612 a Spanish Benedictine father wrote a history of Algiers, in the course of which he narrated at length the martyrdom of Geronimo, and described particularly the situation of the bastion in which his body lay. In 1847 a translation of this passage was published in an Algerian newspaper, and in 1853, when the old fortress was destroyed, search was made. Exactly as had been described, the skeleton was discovered, and on plaster of Paris being poured into the impression in the cement, the figure of the martyr emerged, the hands tied behind it, much as he had been three centuries before. This plaster cast is to-day in the Bibliothèque Musée. As we stood silent beside it one evening the old days seemed very near, and the ghosts of Barbary peopled the twilight.

To walk from the French town to the Arab town in Algiers is to be brought sharply up against the racial problem, always the most vital matter when East and West meet, with the significance of its contrasts and the uncertainty of its future. The Arab town is a rabbit-warren of interlaced streets, a maze of stairways, narrow gateways, twisting streets, and blind alleys. You would quickly be lost without a guide. And all the houses turn their backs to you —that is the Eastern way. Till the French came, the streets had no names and the houses no numbers. Why should they have? There was no postman or tradesman's messenger; the owner expected no visitors; he knew his own house and he did not want other people to know it. To-day there are street names and house numbers, but the life of the Moor goes on behind those blank walls and heavy doors exactly

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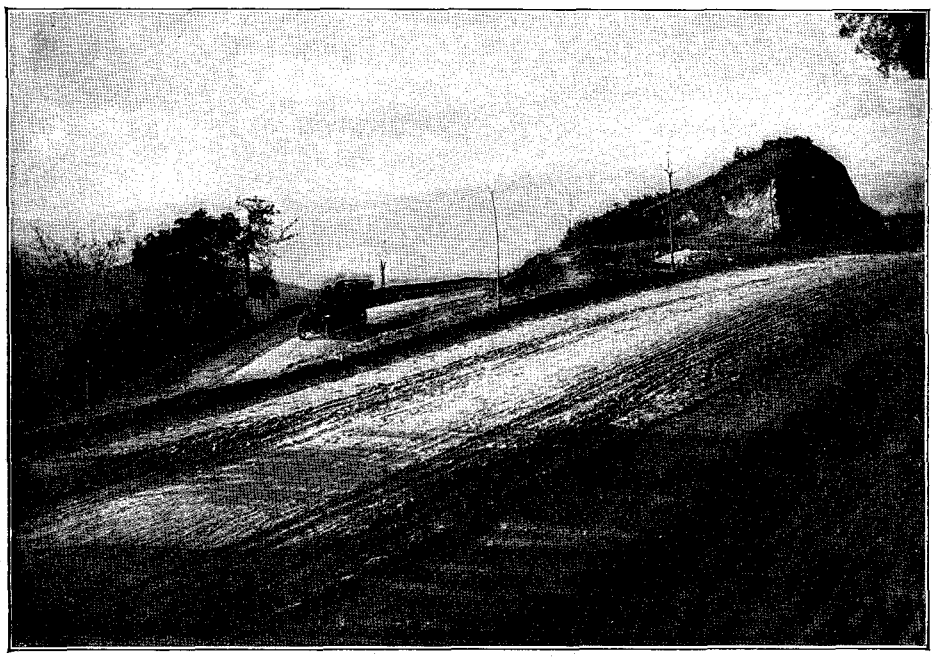
as it did centuries ago. The French authorities tolerate no flagrant scandal, and an Arab who is found maltreating his wife is arrested and punished. But all the foreigners can do touches but a thread of the fringe of native life. No foreigner knows what the Arab does; to few has it been given to understand what he thinks; within his house he is as much master in Algiers as he is in Mecca, so long as he avoids the appearance of what the infidel calls evil, and so long as he complies with certain demands, equally foolish and outrageous to him, in respect of registration, vaccination, sanitation, and the like. There is no sharp boundary between the two communities: if you follow a street far enough you pass the imperceptible frontier. "After so many years," says M. Fromentin, "there are no barriers between the two cities except those of suspicion and antipathy existing between the two races, but those suffice to separate them. They touch one another, they live in the closest companionship, but neither meet nor mingle except in the worst of each—the dirt of their gutters and their vices." To any one who has ever seen for a moment behind the veil of native life there is something almost terrifying about the impenetrable mystery of these silent houses. Things happen there, and human nature assumes aspects there, of which the Western world never dreams. I confess to being uneasy when I see careless and ignorant Westerners—certainly when I see Western women—walking alone in the native quarters of Eastern towns. Suppose one of those dark doors should open suddenly, the stranger be dragged quietly within, and the door shut? That stranger might disappear forever without leaving a single trace. It would be useless to search, unless the authorities were prepared to ransack every house, to its most private apartments, in a whole district, and to do that would be, if not to provoke a revolt, at least to stir up such dangerous unrest and hostility as to make it impossible. What might happen to that stranger is best not considered. If his or her captors so chose, there would be no more trace than marks the spot where a stone has fallen into the sea. Such an event is, of course, very unlikely, but it has horribly happened, and might happen again. The Western woman is happily ignorant of the tyranny of sex in the Eastern temperament.



One of the many hairpin corners on the great road into Kabylia.

If a century of Western domination has left the Eastern mind thus unaffected, is

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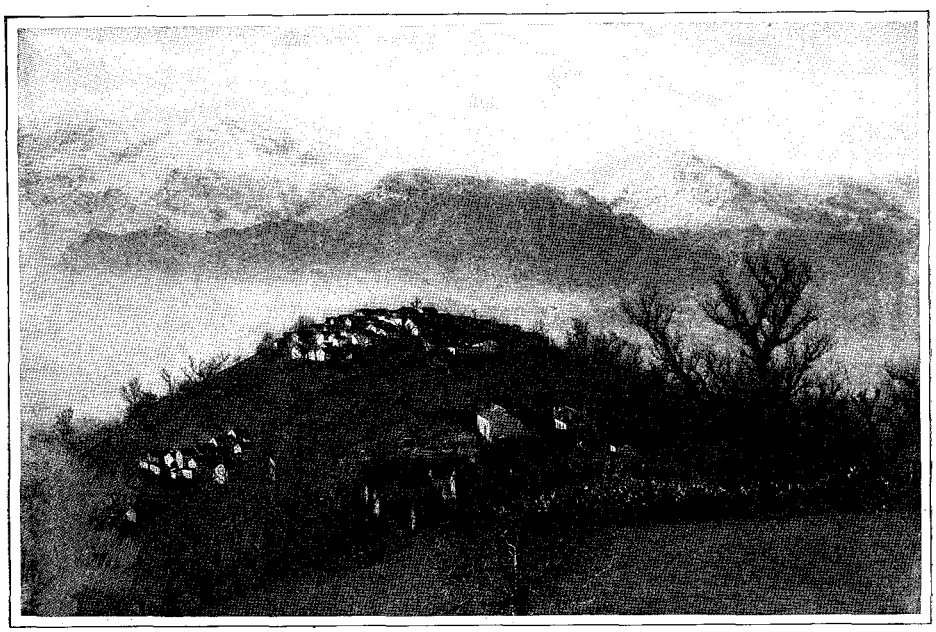

A Kabylia hill-village under the snows.

there any reason to suppose that another century will be different? That is the question prompted by this native town, within rifle-shot of the governor-general's palace and the luxurious European villas on the opposite side of the amphitheatre. It is the question of Calcutta and Cairo, just as of Algiers. Opinions differ here, and there, as to the answer. "There are attractions as impossible in *moral* as in chemistry," says M. Fromentin. "All the politics of the centuries will not change the law of human hatred into the law of love." On the other hand, the author I have previously quoted, a French army surgeon who has lived long in Africa and studied the Arab intimately and with sympathy, asserts positively that the present relationship cannot last. "French domination in North Africa will either be arabophile, or it will not be at all. To wish to govern the country without those, or against those, to whom it belonged is a form of madness which cannot last." And, curiously enough, the last two books upon North Africa that I have read, this one of Dr. Saint-Paul and the account by M. Visscher, of the British Niger Political Service, both speak of the great and growing influence of the Young Turk party in this portion of the Mohammedan world. The victory of Japan over Russia set the Eastern world heaving and moving, and some of these movements, like the Chinese revolution, will develop fatefully for the West. Among them Panislamism found a rebirth. The re-

The unveiled women of Kabylia in their scarlet and yellow homespun garments.—Page 266.

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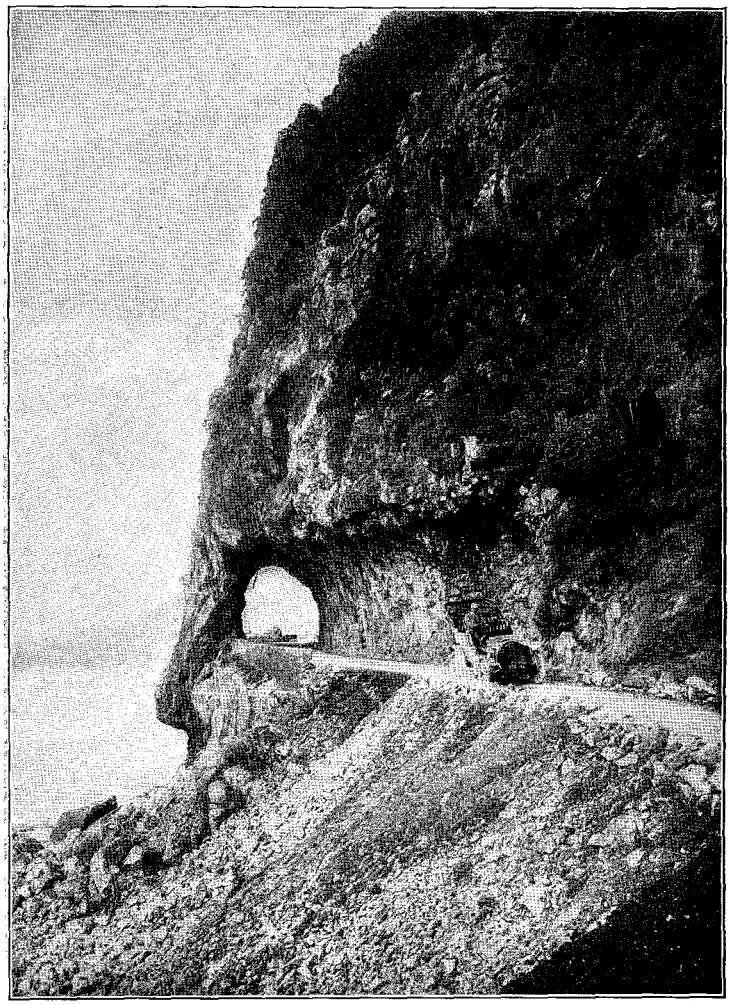
nascence of the East will probably be the phenomenon of the twentieth century.

Algeria consists, roughly speaking, of a series of zones running parallel with the latitude. First come the town and the long suburbs of Algiers; then to the west, behind the town, a wooded country called the Sahel; then a district known as the Tell, containing the great plain of the Metidja; then one broken chain of the Atlas Mountains; then a wide bare plain, enclosed to the south by the other chain of the Atlas; and finally the Sahara Desert. Our route lay first due east, parallel with the Mediterranean, then south-east past Constantine, till we should strike the north and south road leading to Biskra and the Sahara.

There is a magnificent mountain road leading in one direction, but we could not take it, as at the time we left it would be blocked by snow. So on a brilliant warm January day—remember, we were a thousand miles south of Paris—we took our last look at Algiers, clustering without disfigurement or interruption right down to its little bay, and looking innocent alike of its strange population and lurid history. A shocking road through an uninteresting country, but the ditches were full of green asphodels and the fields of artichokes, bordered with hedges of cassia and orange-



The coast road between Bougie and Djidjelli.—Page 270.

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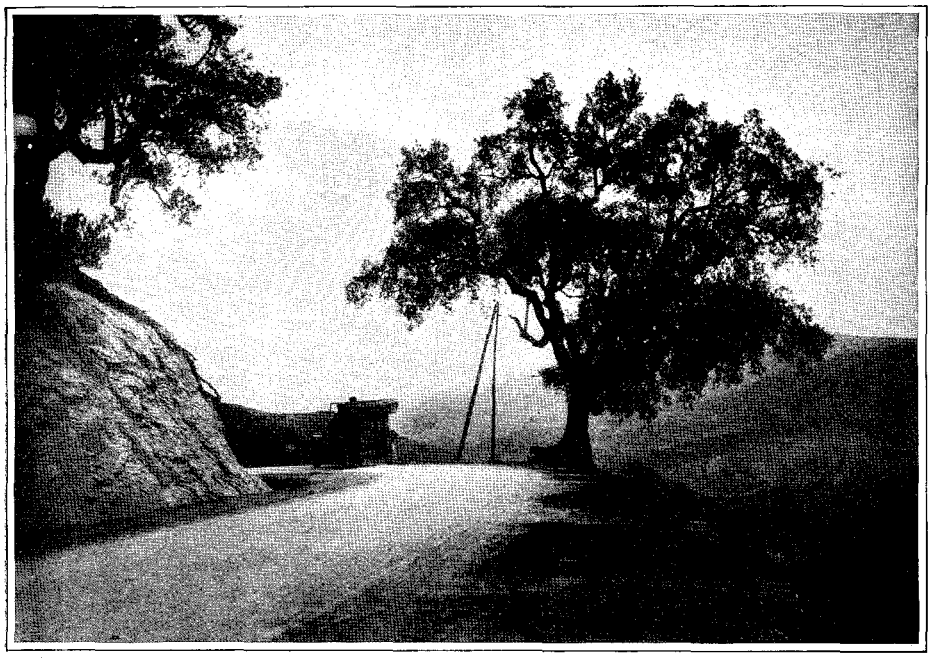

The evergreen cork oak.

trees, and dotted over with eucalyptus and planes and olives and myrtles and castor-oil trees. Upon the top of a low pole by the road-side stood a stork upon its big nest. "What a pity we 'aven't got a gun!" sighed my cockney chauffeur as we stopped to photograph it. The thin cattle were looking carefully for a living among the lentiscus and wild cork scrub on the sun-browned hills, and the huddled shepherd leaned on his stick beside his ragged flock, which he harangues and whacks all day long, and at evening, after his prayer, takes home with him. After sixty miles we rise gradually to a considerable height and find strange hills spread out before us, smooth and bare, with rain-washed channels, the bare earth having been cleared of one crop and another not having yet showed sign—a curious prospect of rolling, red-ploughed earth, sun-baked, greenless, stoneless, furrowless, weedless.

The country looks as though it were moulded in red clay, and the mountains rise out of it without a tree or an "accident," without vegetation, without woodland. For the first time in our lives we looked upon a hill made of the same material from bottom to top, its russet surface only broken by the shadows where a fold of earth occurred. In Italy, in order to cultivate such a slope, it would have been made into terrace upon terrace. One wonders how they can possibly till and sow and reap it here. One other reflection: in the plains of any hot country the roofs are flat; as soon as the mountains are reached, pent roofs begin, and the higher the mountains the steeper the pitch of the roofs. So it was here. Through these strange hills we glide down to Tizi-Ouzou, the capital of Kabylia, built upon the side of a conical hill with a white fort on its apex. A few miles farther the snow-peaks of the Atlas burst upon us. This first afternoon brought us one of our most superb views, below us the purple undulations of the ploughed plain, a splendidly engineered road before us, leading to the wooded foot-hills, with the jagged snowy peaks beyond.

As almost everywhere, these mountains also have saved a race from absorption or extinction, and have preserved the human qualities which perish in the plains. It is the story of Switzerland and the Caucasus again. Nobody knows the origin of the Kabyles. Their fair complexions, blue eyes, red hair show that they are not Asiatic or African. They came under Okba, a lieutenant of the Khalif Omar, in the seventh century, and conquered the human débris

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left in Roman Africa—negroes, Phœnicians, Jews, Greeks, and Romans. They were civilized, and possessed a culture and institutions of their own, and ruled till savage Turkish hordes came from Arabia and swept over the country, save the mountains, in which the Kabyles took refuge and lived an independent life till the French, not without great difficulty and heavy loss, subdued them, but left their institutions little modified, in 1857. Their religion is a pale Mohammedanism, their government democratic, their language Coptic, their original caligraphy extinct; their women, who enjoy a well-deserved reputation for beauty, go unveiled, and are covered with the silver and coral jewelry which sells dear in the shops of Algiers, and their most interesting product a curious varnished yellow pottery, with quaintly traditional Roman and Phœnician designs in red and black. Good specimens of this are becoming difficult to procure, our only find being a quaint and treasured camel which we brought home, through many ups and downs, packed in a tool-box.

Hitherto we had motored through a country of men, where all the women were hidden or unsexed by veils and swaddling-clothes. But now we were in a country where the population was complete, and women both see and are seen, and share alike in the labor and its reward.

We liked the Kabyles, and planned some day to follow them into their remoter homes. They are handsome and friendly and intelligent and gay. In the village of Adeni they sat perched like red-headed white birds under a clump of gnarled old olive trees, with a background of purple mountains, lit up by a golden sunset; and with great enjoyment and laughter they helped us to photograph two tiny girls in red, with the blackest and velvetiest eyes ever seen. Just when the mountains seemed to block our way and the difficulties of such an ascent loomed threateningly ahead, the road became a perfect piece of engineering, and up and up we mounted, to the walled little town of Fort National, three thousand feet above the sea, our goal for the night. This was built by the French to hold the conquered country, but the Kabyles did not yield up their independence without one more struggle, for in 1871 they rose, destroyed Tizi-Ouzou, and besieged for sixty days the little garrisons in the forts there and here. The insurrection was marked by a massacre of French colonists and desperate fighting on both sides, but the conquest was final, though the old spirit which drove out the Romans and kept back the Arabs still looks out through the eyes of these upright and proud mountaineers.

Our first hundred miles and our first day of Algerian travel ended in a miserably cold and uncomfortable inn, but we were more than glad we had come to Africa.

If my sole object were to persuade the reader to take his automobile to Algeria, I should stop here with the one word "Go!" Go next March, or next October, stay as long as you can, and penetrate as far as you can—only go. Take my word for it, without further narrative, that your enjoyment will be vast and your memories vivid and life-long. But as most readers, for one reason or another, may not go, let me now tell of two of the days upon which the above promise is founded.

From Fort National the road runs straight over the Djurdjura Mountains, crossing them at the Pass of Tirourda, five thousand seven hundred and seventy-two feet high. This would certainly be blocked by snow in January, so we determined to go as far as we could with safety and then return to rejoin the coast road we had quitted at Tizi-Ouzou. Soon we were running through such a land as we had never seen before. The road leads along a narrow ridge forming the upper edge of a great valley extending for many miles. On the left are the mountains, their dark, perpendicular crags alone rising clear of the snow; on our right the valley is filled with innumerable conical hills, each having a Kabyle village perched upon its top. The hills and the villages are all exactly similar—red, unterraced slopes and closely grouped earthen houses with tiled roofs. There seems nothing to distinguish one from another as we look down upon a hundred of them, and we wonder how a man finds his hill and his home, and again how on earth he tills these precipitous slopes so well. It is as though one looked down upon a colony of great African ant-hills from an aeroplane, or like a small-scale relief map of Switzerland. "The view of this strange relief is unforgettable," truly

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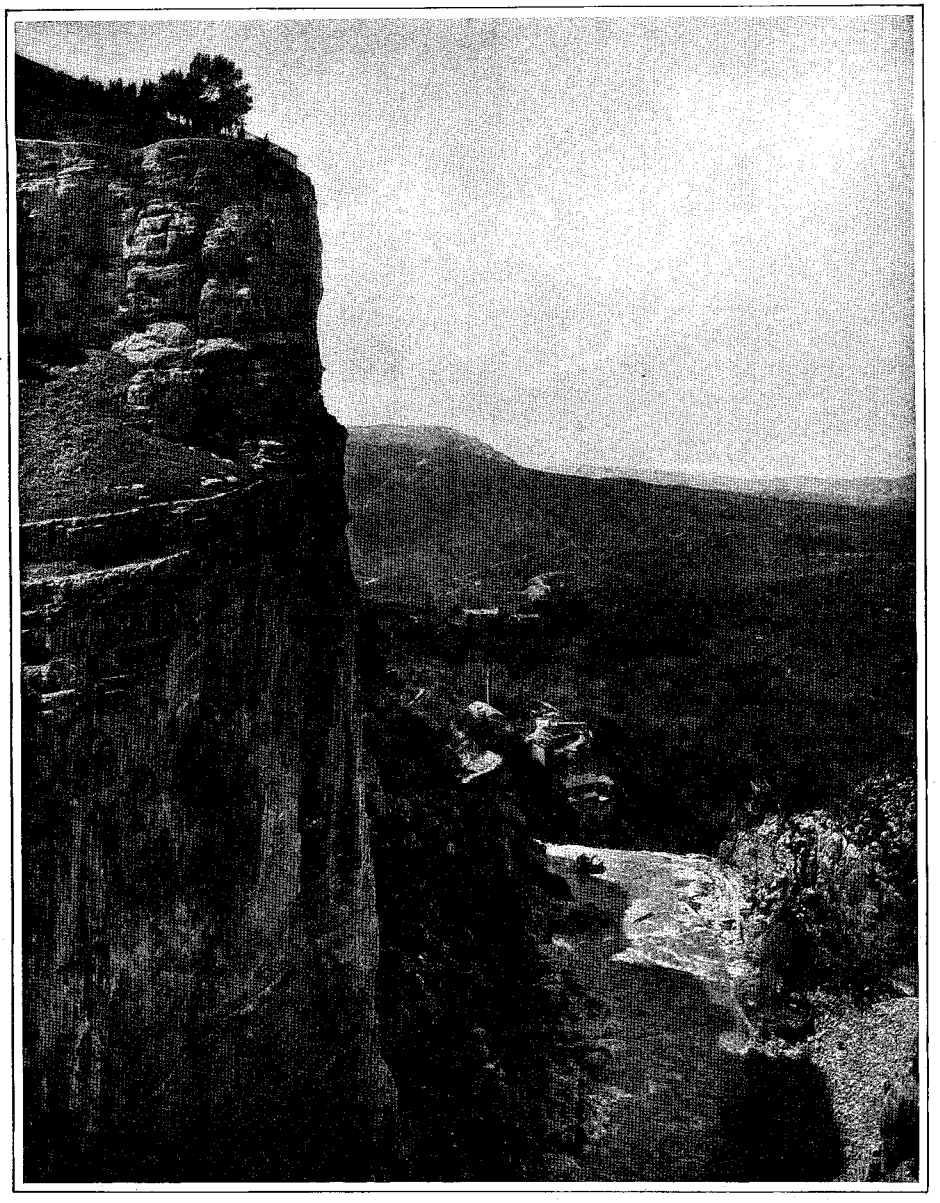

The rock rampart on which Constantine is built.— Page 270.

says the French guide-book. In summer the whole country is carpeted with wild flowers, but now the sunnier slopes bear only fig trees and pollarded ash, and where rocky the ground is covered with scrub of wild olive, stunted cork, evergreen oak, wild thyme, and heath. A dozen miles on is the little white French town of Michelet, inhabited chiefly, we are told, by "functionaries," of whom French administration everywhere, here just as in France or Tong-king, produces such an abundant crop; but a mile or two beyond the town the snow became too deep for our car, so we left it by the road-side, an object of vast interest to the natives driving their laden asses down to market, and walked on to the top of the pass.

The view is certainly superb, and a French traveller hardly exaggerates in call-

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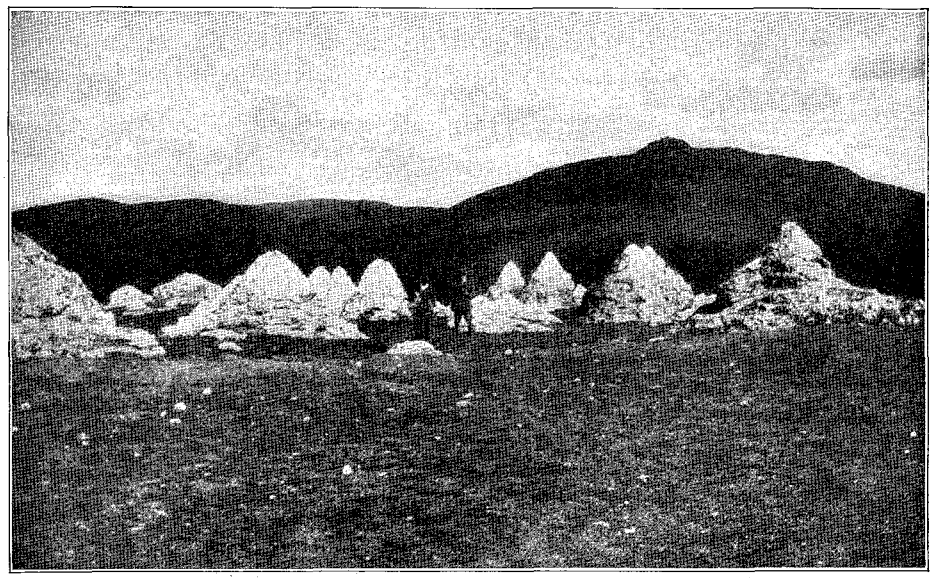

The mounds of carbonate of lime at Hammam Meskoutine.—Page 275.

ing it "unique in the world." For more than thirty miles the Djurdjura forms an almost vertical wall of rocks on the horizon, the highest being Lella Khadidja, nearly eight thousand feet, while shielded by them and extending for miles on each side below you is the strange valley of hills, dotted with white villages like clutches of eggs. Algeria is an unworked gold-mine for a daring landscape-painter.

The market was in full swing when we got back to Fort National, but though the town was crowded with natives, we could see nothing to buy except oranges and one heap of second-hand European clothes. I noticed, however, two unmistakable symptoms of civilization. Every native seemed to go into the wine-shop and filled a bottle he produced from under his *bournous*, and then into the post-office to buy stamps. The road down was made memorable by groups of charming Kabyle women in red and yellow—apparently the favorite colors of Kabylia—bedecked with great clasp-brooches of silver and coral. They were willing enough to be photographed, and to sell their ornaments, but they ask too much for them. All were carrying on their heads bright jars of water or oil, or bundles of cork-wood, and one—a queenly creature—was crowned with a load of manure!

So, back through the red hills, now turning violet and purple in the sunset, causing needless anxiety to the youthful shepherds driving their cattle home, we came under a pale full moon into Azazga for the night, after a day's run of sixty miles—"one of the most interesting days I have ever spent motoring," says my lady's diary. But the first entry for the next day surpasses it: "Another superb day, and I think the finest run we have yet had—so varied in character and striking all the way, and perfectly beautiful at intervals." Our road lay between two great cork forests, till, with dramatic suddenness, on turning a corner, we reached the top of the Col de Tigdint, three thousand two hundred feet, and an exquisite panorama of hills broke into view, so unexpected and unannounced as to be positively startling. Countless peaks lie before us—all bare and blue, with the sea behind them. Neither pen nor photograph can do justice to this prospect. "The prospect is quite unearthly," says my faithful diarist. "We seem behind the scenes, as though we looked down from heaven. It is perhaps the finest view I have ever seen."

Down again, along an admirably engineered road, through apparently boundless forests of cork and oak, with wide fire-belts cut at intervals—all government property and scientifically worked. The road is bordered with smilax, arbutus, and white clematis, and over the tree-tops the snow-capped Djurdjura appear constantly.

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Great wagons of timber and cork bark often block the way, and we chat with the foresters till we can pass them. After the forests, tilled land again, dotted with magnificent gnarled old olive trees, round which the native plough, a rough wooden implement with one plain spike, is scratching the rich soil. At El Kseur we find two things: a *déjeuner du pays*, consisting of cold wild asparagus, a duck from the farmyard, a dandelion salad, and fat walnuts, and second, the high-road to Bougie, the seaport of Eastern Kabylia, a flourishing town, equally picturesque in situation and in history. French candles, by the way, used to be made from wax imported from here; hence their name of *bougies*.

This town, perhaps, even more than Algiers, combines in itself the beauty and the varied story of North Africa. It is built upon an amphitheatre formed of the lower slopes of the Mount Gouraya (two thousand one hundred feet), part of the Djurdjura range, with again other hills, six thousand five hundred feet high, behind this, bearing forests of cedar and pine. More rain falls here than anywhere in Algeria, and the vegetation is therefore most luxuriant. The jagged snow-peaks behind, the great cedar slopes, the amphitheatre, the precipitous streets, the sweeping bay, the blue waters, and across them the glowing hills, render Bougie one of the most theatrically picturesque places we have ever seen. I begin to fear that my enthusiasm for Algerian prospects will appear exaggerated, so in defence I borrow the description of Bougie from a poet's pen. Thomas Campbell, well known for his "Gertrude of Wyoming," "The Pleasures of Hope," and "Hohenlinden," visited the town in 1834, and this is what it moved him to say:

"Such is the grandeur of the surrounding mountain scenery that I drop my pen in despair of giving you any conception of it. Scotchman as I am, and much as I love my native land, I declare to you that I felt as if I had never before seen the full glory of mountain scenery. The African Highlands spring up to the sight not only with a sterner boldness than our own, but they borrow colors from the sun unknown to our climate, and they are mantled in clouds of richer dye. The farthest-off summits appeared in their snow like the turbans of gigantic Moors, whilst the nearest masses glowed in crimson and gold under the light of the morning."

We pass two shallow salt lakes and waste time by trying to get near enough to the rosy flamingoes to photograph them.—Page 276.

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I thought the Georgian Road through the Caucasus bore signs of the passage of more races of men than almost any other spot. But Bougie runs it close, for Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Berbers, Arabs, Spaniards, Turks, and French have possessed it in turn, and have all left their plain footprints on its rocks. Its history begins as a Carthaginian emporium; then the Romans took it, and Augustus founded a colony of veteran soldiers there, calling it Saldae, and his watercourse, with its rocky tunnel three hundred and fifty yards long, is used to this day, and we walk upon his pavements, though his fortifications, palace, baths, and mosaics are ruins. Then the Vandals took it, and in the eleventh century El Nacer, the Berber chief, —doubtless one of those whom Gibbon describes as "Barbarians, in religion and manners the countrymen of Mahomet, who emerged from the bloody factions of a palace to a provincial command and an independent throne"—filled it with his blond Hamites, and called it Bedjaïa. These were the days of its splendor and its now rare Hispano-Mauresque pottery, when it counted one hundred thousand inhabitants, and out of its abundance endowed learning and religion in many famous mosques and colleges, and out of its pride committed piracy far and wide. This was its undoing, for the husband of Isabella sent fourteen ships of war—with the result that this inscription in Latin may still be read on the wall of its citadel: "Ferdinand V, illustrious King of Spain, has taken this city by force of arms, from the perfidious children of Hagar, in the year 1509." So the town became Bugia, and seventeen years later Leo Africanus, the Moorish geographer, wrote of it: "Wonderful is the architecture of its houses, its temples, colleges, and palaces." The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, Ferdinand's grandson, took refuge here after he had failed in an attack upon Algiers, but the Algerians followed him, stormed the castle below and the citadel above, and forced its Spanish governor back to Spain, where he lost his head, while Bugia lost all its wealth and its wonders. I came by chance upon its epitaph in the acrid pages of Gibbon: "A remnant of trade still adheres to the commodious harbor of Bugia, which, in a more prosperous age, is said to have contained about twenty thousand houses; and the plenty of iron which is dug from the adjacent mountains might have supplied a braver people with the instruments of defence." The decay of centuries followed the Turks, and when the French appeared before it, in 1833, even the ruins of its proud past were long overgrown, and its last act of war was the prompt surrender of its handful of defenders.

Now, as Bougie, with its railways, harbor, quays, industrial schools, and excellent Hôtel de France, it is commercially prospering once more, as indeed it ought to do, with so rich and fertile a land behind it.

Constantine, the second city of Algeria, was our goal, and the ordinary way (except the roundabout railway route) is by diligence over the Kerrata Pass to Setif, and thence by train. But the road on the other side of the pass was blocked, and the diligence had not come through for several days. And we preferred to see the coast road by Djidjelli, but on no account to miss the Chabet Gorge which leads to the pass, so in pouring rain we splashed along the coast past Cape Aokas to the fork of the road and then turned due south and inland. "Almost any amount of inconvenience," says Sir Lambert Playfair, "will be repaid by the magnificence of the scenery between Kerrata and Cape Aokas, which is hardly to be surpassed in any part of the world." This is certainly true, and the French, the greatest road-builders since the Romans, have constructed no finer road than that which, since 1873, connects Setif with the sea. The Georgian Road from Vladikavkas to Tiflis is the only one I know to compare with it in solemn grandeur, and that is commonplace beside this amazing feat of engineering. So difficult was this route to find and keep that it is stated an Arab could not traverse it on foot before the road was made. A gorge five miles long, so narrow that you could throw a stone across it at almost any point; a road half cut, half built, hung upon the rock-side, first on the right, and then, crossing it by a seven-arched bridge thrown across the abyss, on the left; a hundred feet or more below the road the rushing river which in geologic time has worn this huge cleft through the mountain range; above the road perpendicular cliffs, a thousand feet high, sometimes actually overhanging it;

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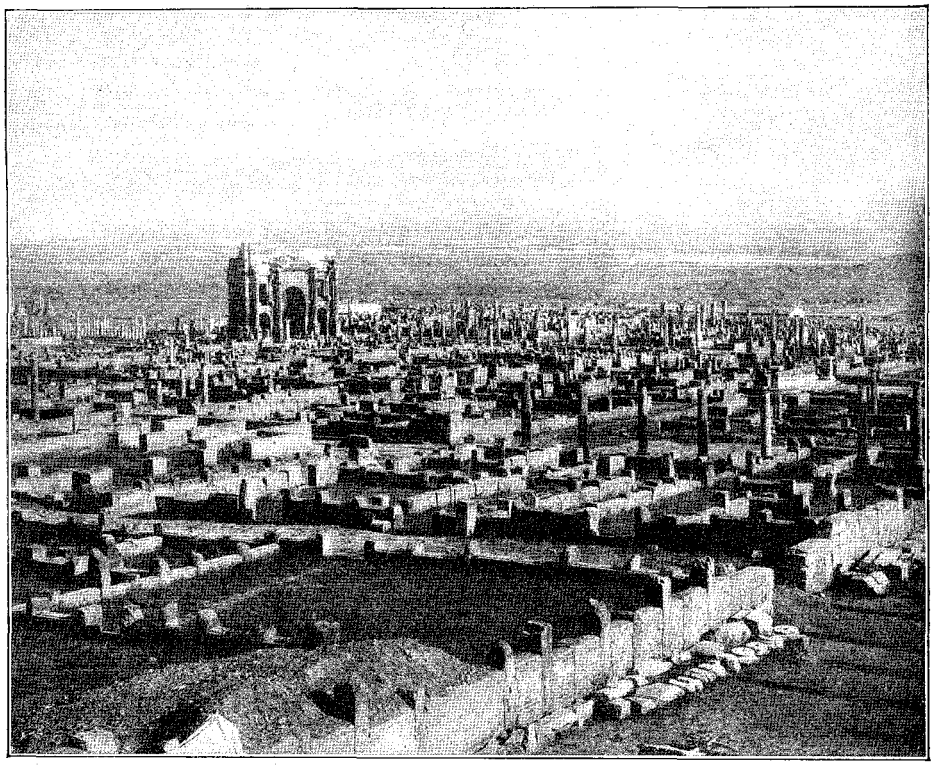

Ruins of the Roman City of Timgad.

On the main road is the African Pompeii, certainly among the most interesting Roman remains to be found anywhere.—Page 275.

great rocks seeming on the totter overhead, and tumbled breaches in the stone parapet and the débris of recently cleared landslides, showing that they often actually fall; a tunnel under a roaring stream; a misty twilight all day long. Such is the Chabet-el-Akra, "the defile of death." I leave the reader to imagine the impression it produces on the mind. Suffice it to say that, though the rain fell in torrents, we lowered the hood of our car with the idea that if anything did fall from the disintegrating rock, we might, perhaps, see it coming; and we drove very quietly, recollecting the Alpine warning that a loud word may loose a trembling avalanche.

In two places in all Algeria there are monkeys—a strange topographical survival—one of them a ravine here, and despite the downpour we were lucky in seeing them—little brown, tailless fellows with rusty muzzles, running easily up the almost perpendicular face of the cliff, occasionally grasping a bush for a swing upward, and disappearing in the holes. Great flocks of pigeons have their homes here, too, and overhead in fine weather we might have seen the eagles soaring.

I have said nothing of the hotels of Algiers. They are for the most part comfortable and clean, the landlords genial, and the food more than good. At the Hotel Chabet, at the summit of the Kerrata Pass, the proprietor welcomed us jovially, spread all our soaked things round the great stove in the common room—it was bitterly cold up there—gave us his own sitting-room, showed us with pride the signature of King Edward in his visitors' book, and prepared us a dish of crayfish à l'Americaine such as we have not enjoyed before or since.

By noon next day we had renewed these impressions and were on the coast road once more; again a fine piece of road-making, battered every mile or two by a landslide, and cut up by the great cork wagons with their eight horses, dodging round these; or the five-horsed diligence on the one side, and huge fallen rocks on the other, left little chance of admiring the scene, but my pho-

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tograph shows its picturesqueness. Of the famous cave we passed I will borrow my diarist's description: "As a rule I hate caves, but this was really a nice one. It was not dirty or stuffy or too hot, the Arab guide did not look murderous, nor did candle-grease ruin my gloves. He had a fine acetylene lamp. Nor did we have to walk miles bent double. No, it is the best cave I have ever seen, the white stalactites and stalagmites being of wonderful diversity, some big and hanging like curtains or funguses, some like macaroni, hanging in tubes all over the ceiling like white fur, but all curious, the whole cave being completely covered, floor and roof, with this extraordinary limestone deposit. It is both beautiful and remarkable." Splashing through seas of mud, plastered with it and soaked by the rain, we came in the late afternoon to Djidjelli, to find the only hotel on the eve of closing for good, with its proprietress rooted to her chair with rheumatism, her son gone to his military service, only a stupid, dirty Arab boy to wait on us, no food to be had without going out to the only little restaurant for it, and no fire without sending out for wood, which arrived soaked. During the night the storm became a wild gale, and in the morning we learned at the diligence office that the Kerrata Pass had been blocked by snow after we left, that the way back to Bougie was cut off by a landslide, and that the road on to Constantine was rendered impassable for wheels by wet sand several metres deep blown on it from the hill above. We were prisoners.

The three days that followed were made up of delay, mishap, and discomfort. For two days the storm kept us miserably in Djidjelli. Then the break in the road was reported mended, and we reached the spot at 10.30 A. M.; till four we watched the Arab gang shovel the sand-mud away, getting a quaint lunch of wild-boar soup and boiled wild boar at a little canteen near by. Then in trying to get round two great chariots, loaded with oak bark and deserted by their drivers, which were stuck fast in the middle of the road, our back wheels sank in deep mud, and in trying with all our forty horse-power to force a way we strained the clutch, and had to be hauled out by a team of mules. It took us three hours and a half, by the light of our electric lamps, to take down the transmission and replace the buckled clutch plates by new ones we had, of course, among our "spares."

At midnight we reached the village of El Milia, where no accommodation was to be had. My official letter from the governor-general secured us the help of the gendarmerie, who, luckily for us, had a barracks there. Some hospitable people turned out of a bedroom for us and provided an impromptu supper, the car was left in the barrack yard, and the chauffeur given a bed in the hospital, whence he emerged in the morning smelling antiseptically. It was a hard day, but, as my diarist sagely remarks, "After all, the joys of travelling are the overcoming of difficulties, and the greater the difficulties the greater the joys." And how could anybody remember delays and dirty hands and aching back and tough boar and stuffy bedroom after they had seen marvellous Constantine towering impregnably above the plain?

First through a shady valley betwixt luxuriant cork forests. Then past tracts of grazing ground and blue-gray seas of asphodel. We stop to dig up roots of these, and squills and colchicums, which now thrive in our garden by the Mediterranean. The road leads ever up, now across brown, rolling, tilled but furrowless fields toward where we see a far-off train winding its way among the hill-tops.

At last we cross the line and reach the top of a pass, the Col des Oliviers, one thousand three hundred feet up, whence a superb view stretches before and behind. Good-by now to the mountains and the forests, the sea and the snows, the proud men and beautiful women of Kabylia—we mean to visit you again some day—and on along a splendid road through what was vineland till the phylloxera devastated it, now bare and dry, to the summit of another pass three thousand feet high; and soon there appears before us, emerging from the plain ahead, a city set upon a hill. Straight up from the level fields rise the rock walls of an amazing natural fortress crowded to its edge with white houses. There is no hint of any approach, and we wonder how this great road will ever curl itself up to that citadel. But we give our car its head, and by and by we pass the town and circle up at the back, ever rising, till at last, at the sweetest hour of the Eastern day, when night

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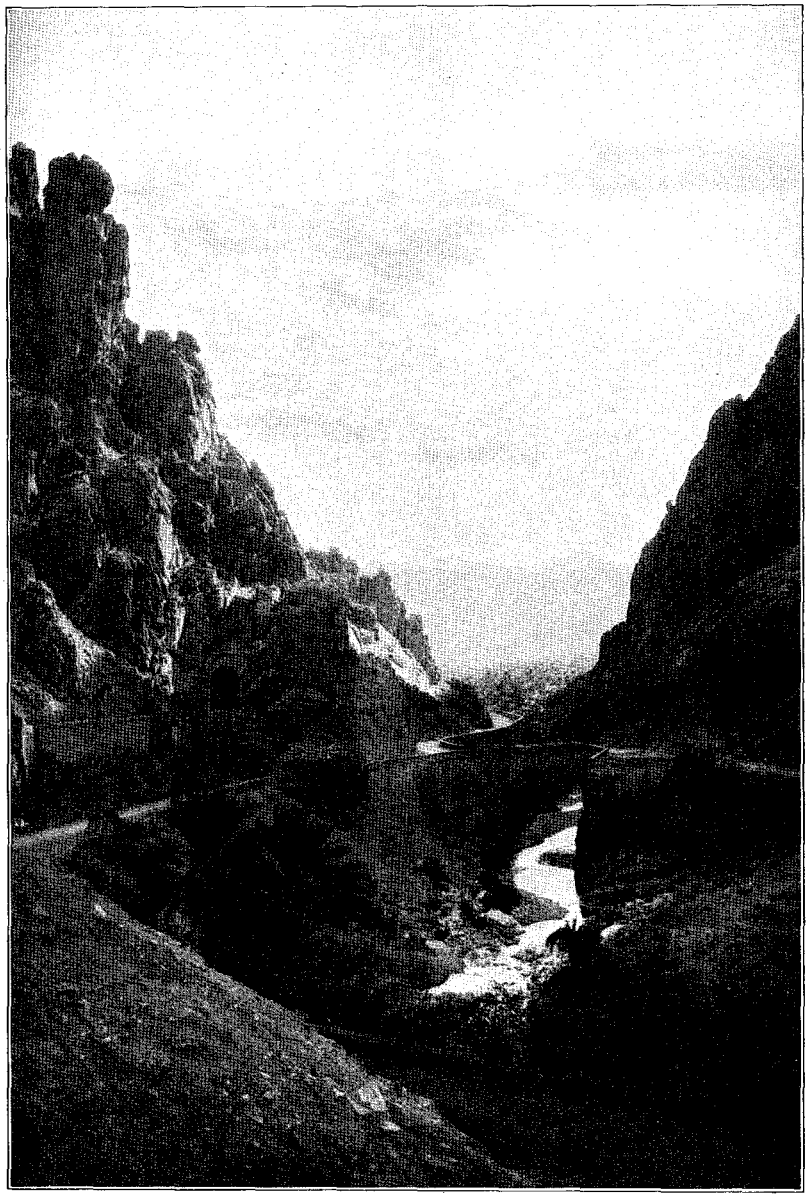

El Kantara—The Gate of the Desert.

Road, railway, and river run side by side through the cleft.—Page 277.

draws near in a mantle of purple and gold, we cross a fine modern stone bridge into a busy square and pull up before a Grand Hotel. Whatever else is forgotten, Constantine will live in our memory always.

What a history the place has! Was there ever such a century of names of kings as those of the Numidian rulers of Constantine two hundred years before Christ —Narva (Hannibal's brother-in-law), Syphax (Hasdrubal's son-in-law), Micipisa, Adherbal, and Jugurtha? Julius Cæsar took it from Pompey's ally Juba I, in 46 B. C., named it Cirta Julia, and for nearly three hundred years it was a Roman colony. Then a revolt overcame and destroyed the place, but Constantine retook

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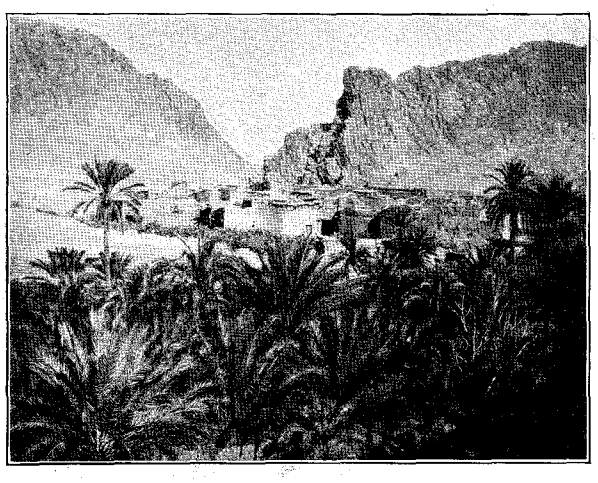
it and renamed it after himself. Three hundred years later the Arab invaders fell upon it and destroyed it barbarously, like every other place they overran, and the subsequent Turkish rule left it a prey to corruption and disorder, where the acclaimed Bey of to-day was to-morrow the victim of the sword, the bow-string, or the prison of his successor, as brief as himself in authority and as miserable in his end. In 1836 a gallant French army perished in assaulting it, but the next year another force was successful, though with fearful loss. The defenders disputed desperately every yard of the advance, and when at last they could no longer hold even the castle itself they sought escape by climbing down long ropes into the ravine; but these broke under the excessive human burden and left men, women, and children lying in dreadful heaps in the dark gorge below.



El Kantara oasis.—Page 278.

Constantine, as the French guide-book quaintly observes, was marked out as a fortress "from the very origin of humanity." It is a quadrilateral plateau of rock about a thousand yards long, sloping from two thousand five hundred feet on the north to one thousand eight hundred and fifty feet on the south. On the north and east its rocky sides rise sheer a thousand feet from the bed of the river Rummel, and only on the west is it connected with the mainland by a narrow isthmus. A Quaker could hardly have helped making a fortress of such an eagle's nest, and Genseric, with all his Vandals, found it the only place in northern Africa that successfully defied him. The town is modern in parts, without much distinction in its buildings, and almost untouched East in other parts. The native quarter and the Jews' quarter are full of color and variety and smells, and a guide is necessary to thread the labyrinth safely. The chief industries are leather and native cotton and silk goods, and probably most visitors bring away a pair of the soft red slippers and a white-hooded *bournous* or an embroidered *gandoura*. But what dwarfs every other interest in Constantine is the pathway through the gorges of the Rummel, executed with skill and daring by a French engineer, and prosaically called "le Chemin des Touristes." A long winding road leads down into the abyss, and a payment of two francs passes you to a path following the windings of the river between the high cliffs, which sometimes almost meet over your head. The pathway runs along rocky edges, is carried on planks over iron bars driven into the rock, or slung on wire, up shaky steps, around abrupt corners, and through two or three tunnels. On the edge several hundred feet above are the houses in brilliant sunshine. The ravine is dark and damp, and the river roars beside you or beneath your feet. We were the only persons in the gorge that day, and the loneliness made the experience more thrilling. The ravine itself, the view through the last tunnel where the river pours itself into the open plain, the fantastic natural moat as seen from the bridge above, the whole illuminated by one's thought of the wonderful history which developed inevitably from nature's architecture here, form one of the most striking and interesting spectacles I have seen in any part of the world. It is surprising that so little is heard of Constantine and the Rummel gorge. "No rhapsodies," says Sir Lambert Playfair, "are too exaggerated to describe its beauties," and I may add that no one can properly see or appreciate the wonder of the place who does not first approach it from the plain.

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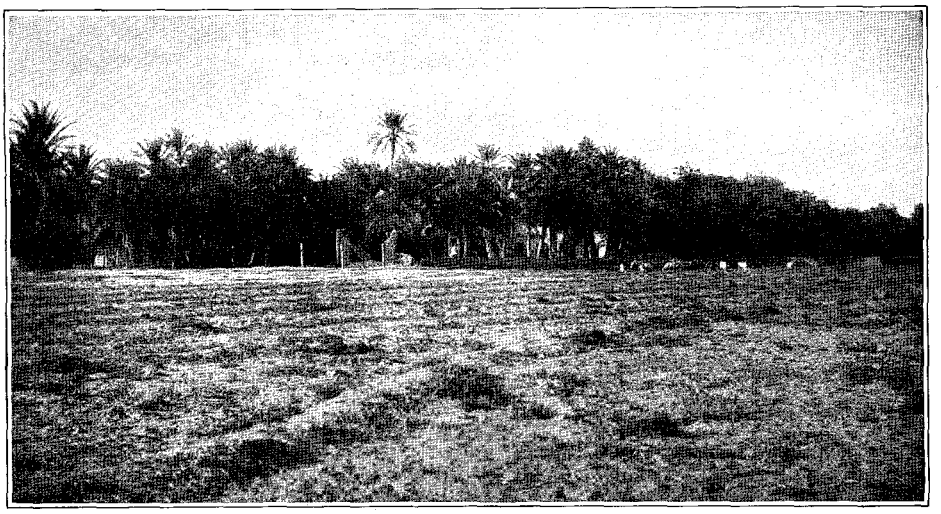
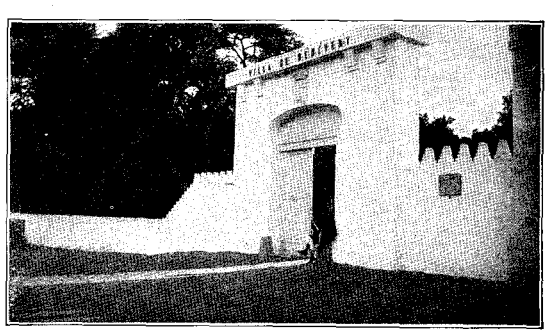


The Garden of Allah from the desert.—Page 279.

Seventy miles from Constantine there is a little motorist's paradise—an ideal place in which to do nothing for a while, and bathe luxuriously after dusty days, and thither in due course we went. It is called Hammam Meskoutine, "the baths of the damned," doubtless because of the temperature of the great springs which issue from the limestone at boiling point. There is a railway station and a hotel, but no town. The hotel consists of separate buildings surrounding an exquisite garden of orange trees, and the springs have made the landscape one of the most curious in the world. When the water has poured over a low cliff into a little river it has deposited a petrified cascade of snow-white carbonate of lime, from which rises always a silvery cloud of steam. Where it bubbles up through the ground it forms in a few years a snowy mound, ever growing as the carbonate is deposited layer upon layer, until at last, when the mound is sometimes thirty feet high, the orifice is choked up and the water finds an issue elsewhere. There are hundreds of these mounds scattered like druidical menhirs in a few acres of land, giving a most fantastic aspect to the country. The water has remarkable medicinal properties, and a bath in one of the swimming tanks connected with the hotel is an exhilarating experience. Here we spent delightful days, and I can imagine no better place in which to rest a while. The hotel is charming, the food and attendance excellent, and if you are as fortunate as we were, to make the acquaintance of M. Rouyer, a charming man and wealthy colonist, Parisian half the year, who owns all the land thereabouts, and farms it himself, he will, perhaps, invite you also to shoot partridges among the olives and hunt the wild boar with him in the mountains.

One other excursion between Constantine and the south I cannot omit, though my reference to it must be brief. Twenty-three miles to the east of Batna, on the main road, is the African Pompeii, certainly among the most interesting Roman remains to be found anywhere. It was the city of Thamugadi, and was founded where six roads met, in 100 A. D., by Lucius Gallus, by order of the Emperor Trojan, to serve



The gate of The Garden of Allah.—Page 279.

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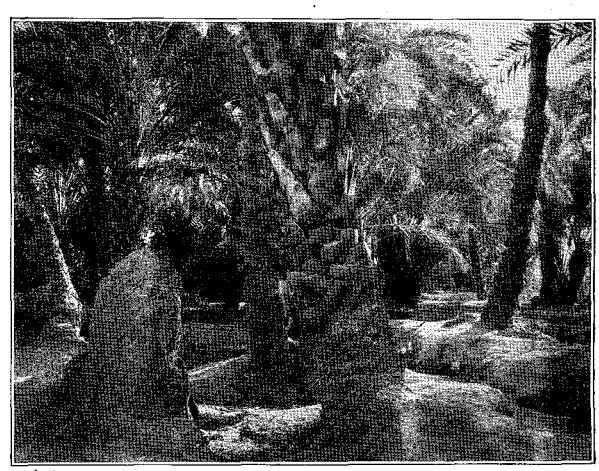
as a nursery for the famous Third Legion—*Ulpia Victrix*, so called from Ulpius, the family name of Trojan himself. In the seventh century, after a period of great prosperity and even distinction, the city fell under the devastating Arab invasion, and then sand, earthquakes, soil washed down from the northern slope of the Aurès Mountains, at the foot of which it lies, and wild vegetation buried it until the French came and devoted forty-five thousand francs a year to its disinterment. Now you can walk along its perfectly paved roads and gain a wonderful notion, from its theatre, its great baths, its elaborate latrines, its shops, its market-place, its temple, its splendid triumphal arch of blue limestones, its stone acqueducts, its forum, with the orator's tribune, and even the lines of the games scratched on the pavement, of what life was in a flourishing Roman city nearly two thousand years ago. A human touch is the simple inscription, roughly drawn by one of the players: VENARI LAVARI LUDERE RIDERE OCCEST VIVERE—"To hunt, to bathe, to play, to laugh, that is life." Happy the soldier of the legion who knew no other side of it! But the victorious Ulpians who laughed and bathed and hunted in Thamugadi have passed away, leaving nothing behind them except this deserted city, many Latin words in the language spoken by the mountaineers, and the striking beauty of the Aurès women.



In the Biskra oasis.—Page 279.

The note given out by a motor running at high speed is, by the number of its vibrations, the lower C of the piano. That is one fact—which has nothing to do with this journey. The *tempo* of an Algerian motor journey is *crescendo*. That is another fact—which has everything to do with it. We looked forward eagerly to Constantine and were not disappointed, but we left it *accelerando* and more eagerly still, for our car's hot muzzle pointed at last straight for the desert. The road was what we have come to call a "fat" one; that is, it was broad and flat and straight, over which our rolling rubber feet carry us fast and unadventurously to our goal. The country is gently undulating, and the hills keep at a respectful distance on either side of the plain. Suddenly we run into a patch of soft mud and stick fast. The road had evidently been washed away, and repaired with soft earth, which the recent rains had turned to deep mud. Friendly natives push us out backward, and after some misgiving we take to the ploughed field at the side and regain the road farther on. The next break is worse, and once more we have to drive into the fields, where a diligence driver is vainly trying to get his four horses to take a stream at full gallop. After half a dozen attempts he gives way to us, and we get through it at full speed. Gradually the road rises, till we come across patches of snow, the hills grow stonier and more snowy, corn-growing has ceased, and the flocks of sheep increase in number and decrease in fatness. It is hard to imagine how they live on these few terebinth patches and juniper bushes. We pass two shallow *chotts*, or salt lakes, and waste time by trying to get near enough to the rosy flamingoes to photograph them. The road crosses a river-bed, but the bridge was washed away three months ago and has not been replaced. (The kind prefect of Batna, we learn later, warned by an official message from Constantine, sent a native to sit here all last night with a lantern, his idea being that a mad English motorist would drive at full speed in the dark.) This means

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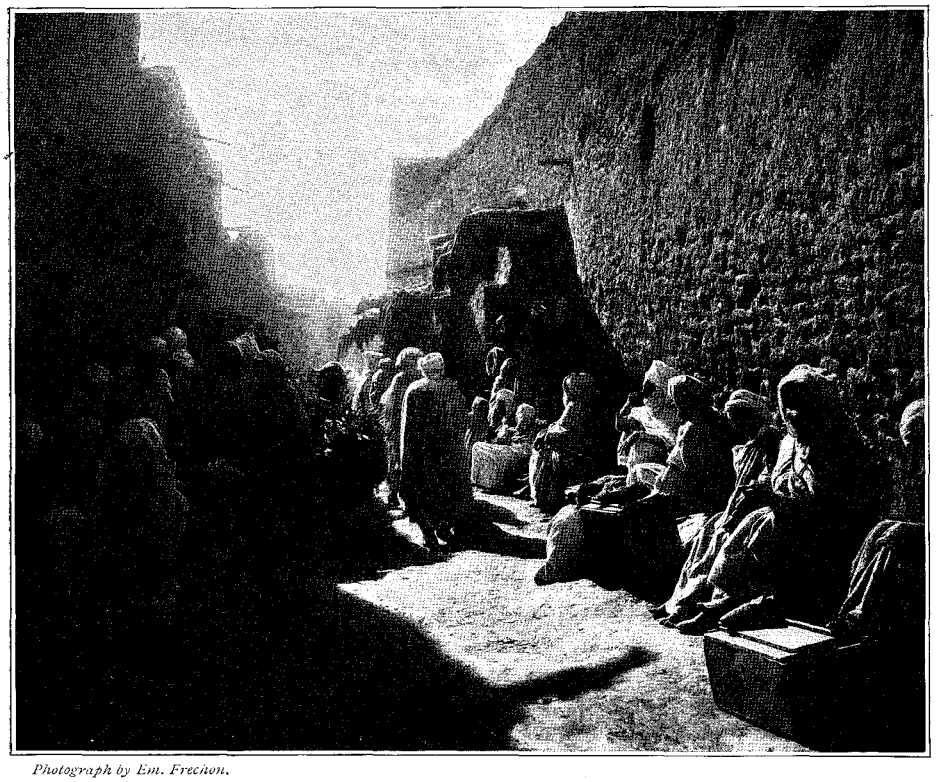

Photograph by Em. Frechon.

In Sidi Okba, near Biskra.

a very slow and muddy détour, where we only just manage to pass, and it is four o'clock when we have done seventy-seven miles and reach Batna, a town of forty thousand people, at a height of three thousand three hundred and fifty feet, in the midst of a well-watered plain. It dates from 1844, when the French expedition to Biskra founded a camp here—its name means "We have spent the night"—and its barracks will hold four thousand men. I call on the prefect to ask about the road, and we push on at once, along a twisting way, cruelly stony, in the dark, the dusky outlines of the mountains seeming to close in upon us to block our way. Suddenly, when our speedometer shows one hundred and thirty miles, a long, brightly lighted wooden house, standing back in its garden, springs up on our right. It is the excellent and most hospitable Hotel Bertrand, and we are at El Kantara—a name of rich promise to us ever since we planned this memorable journey.

Calceus Herculis, the Romans called it, tradition declaring that the God cleared this way through the mountains by a kick, and as

> "In yon strait path a thousand
> May well be stopped by three,"

they garrisoned it amply by a company of bowmen from Palmyra. The Arabs call it *Foum-es-Sahara*—the mouth of the Sahara. It is a V-shaped cleft through the mountains which hem in the rocky plateau up which we have come. Here they are about three hundred feet high, and the cleft is as clean and conspicuous as if cut by the blow of an axe. El Kantara ("The Bridge"), after a Roman bridge, restored out of recognition, consists only of the hotel, a post-office, and a couple of houses, but few of the crowded cities of the world produce so sudden or so unforgettable an impression. It is the exact point of division between two countries, two climates, one may almost say two civilizations. It is the only gate between the agricultural land of plain and high plateau and the boundless wilderness of sand, barren but for its innumerable palmy oases. The native belief, quoted by

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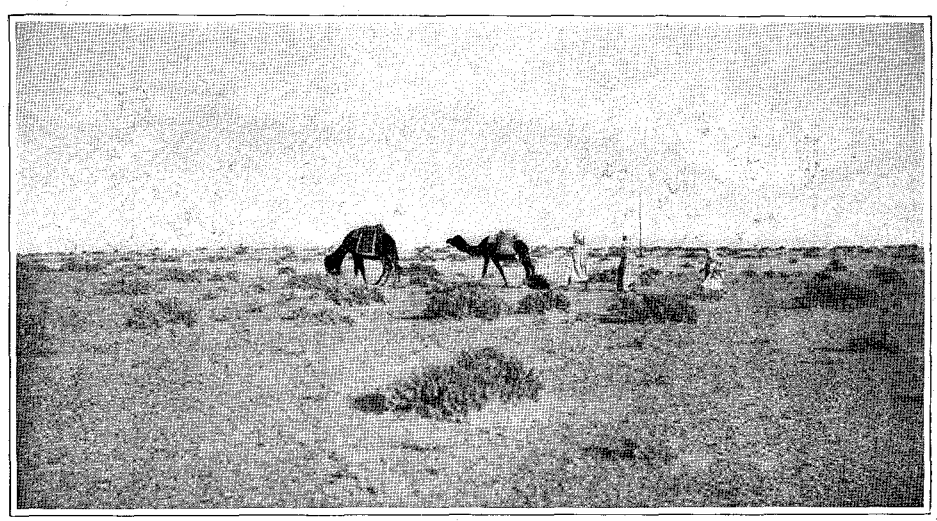
all writers as a quaint fancy not wholly destitute of scientific basis, is that at El Kantara the hills stop all the clouds drifting south; that, as Fromentin says, "the rain comes there to die, and winter never passes this wonderful bridge," and in proof they allege the fact that on one side the hills are black, the color of rain, while on the other they are rosy, the tint of sunshine.

Road, railway, and river run side by side through the cleft, and just as you reach the nick of the pass the superb spectacle of an oasis of ninety thousand palms, the first naturally grown ones to be seen, with its villages of sun-baked clay houses, bursts upon you. It is said that when the head of the Duc d'Aumale's column, in 1844, reached the bridge, the men instinctively halted, and in a sudden impulse of enthusiastic admiration the band saluted with its music this "amazing vision" of sudden sun and sand and south and verdure.



The Sahara as it is.

During the morning we strolled happily through the oasis and about the village, with an Arab lad for guide, and after lunch we drove again through the narrow pass over a sandy track rather than a road, across dry river-beds, crossing the railway twice, and soon met a fine drove of camels, which we photographed copiously—the first I had seen since that quarter of a mile of them, tied nose to tail by the great Chinese Wall, bringing coal to Peking from Mongolia. The next oasis is called La Fontaine des Gazelles, and beyond it along a finely engineered road we ran at top speed across the weed-spotted pink plain. The one remaining chain of hills was soon reached, and at the top of the low pass, the Col de Sfa, there lay stretched out as far as eye could reach a vast sea—the Sahara. We have come unto its yellow sands at last. One's first sight of the sea, one's first sight of the prairie, and one's first sight of the desert—three similar and uneffaceable impressions. We stop and gaze long at it—in silence.

Biskra is the southernmost point of the tourist in Algeria, four hundred and forty miles from Algiers. He arrives in a luxurious train and stops at the luxurious Royal Hotel; he purchases Eastern curios manufactured for him in Paris or Birmingham; his arrival always fortunately coincides with a native baptism, marriage, or funeral—the fact being that the guides arrange any of these to order; he goes on the sly to see the dancing girls of the Ouled Naïl tribe—which spectacle, to adopt Lincoln's phrase, for those who like that sort of thing, is just about the sort of thing that they like; and if he is unusually perspicacious for a tourist, he discovers finally that, in the words of a frank French guide, "the chief native industry is the exploitation of the visitor." I should like to have seen Biskra when it was the Roman Vescera, when the Turks captured it four centuries ago, or when the French took it in 1844. To-day

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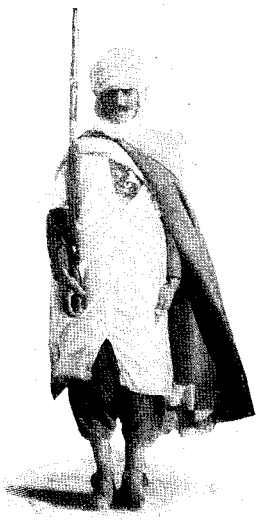
it is the least interesting town in Algiers. But it has one of the driest climates on the globe, for the sun always pours down upon it, and rain never falls. Its oasis, three miles long, contains one hundred and fifty thousand date-palms and thousands of fruit trees. And it is the last outpost of civilization before you reach that incomparable natural phenomenon, where luxury can never penetrate, and where the price of experience is silence and thirst, heat and ague, marvels of sky and terrors of earth, and slowly but surely all-devouring sand—the millions of square miles of the Sahara Desert, of whose origin man is ignorant, and of which all he knows is that as it has been from the beginning, so it will be to the end.

Every one has read "The Garden of Allah," and the comparatively small part of it which exists outside Mr. Hichens's luxuriant imagination is here, half a mile from the hotel. It was originally an old garden of the Biskra oasis, and was walled around and artifically elaborated at great cost by its eccentric owner, Count Landon. It consists of a mass of date-palms, with sunk beds containing small palms, oleanders, hibiscus, and a few other ordinary plants, countlessly repeated and jumbled together into "shrubberies" of dense green. It is marvellously kept up, the innumerable paths, which wander in and out aimlessly, being of a fine pâte-like surface of mud, perfectly level, and all of exactly the same width, bevelled off sharply at the edges, and strewn with fine sand. No house exists, but a number of small buildings of little individual interest, scattered among the trees at long distances apart. One consists of bedrooms, another is the kitchen, another baths, another—far from the kitchen building—a dining-room, and one charming little doorless and windowless pavilion is furnished with leather cushions and beautiful old carpets and Moorish lanterns. Clearly, the whole place was designed for a life as remote as possible, in every respect, from the Western world. It is for sale, but we have no wish to buy it, as we know and love a far more beautiful garden on the shore of the Mediterranean.



Abd-el-Kader, our native escort.

We stood on the edge of the desert and looked out over it. Then we looked at each other. Then we talked of other things, neither wishing to be first to suggest the mad idea. Then we read in the guide-book: "Biskra to Touggourt, about one hundred and thirty miles; a track possible for wheeled traffic, but sandy in parts, and swampy in places in bad weather; it would be imprudent to venture upon it on a bicycle or in an automobile." Next day we looked again, and at last one of us put the thought of both into words: "Well, I suppose we shall have to try it!" We had seen enough of the precious "track" when driving to Sidi Okba and the negro villages, inhabited by poverty-stricken mongrel herds of every black race of Africa, and from what we had been told, to know that to plunge into the

Lieut. Clerget de St. Leger on his *Mehari*.—Page 282.

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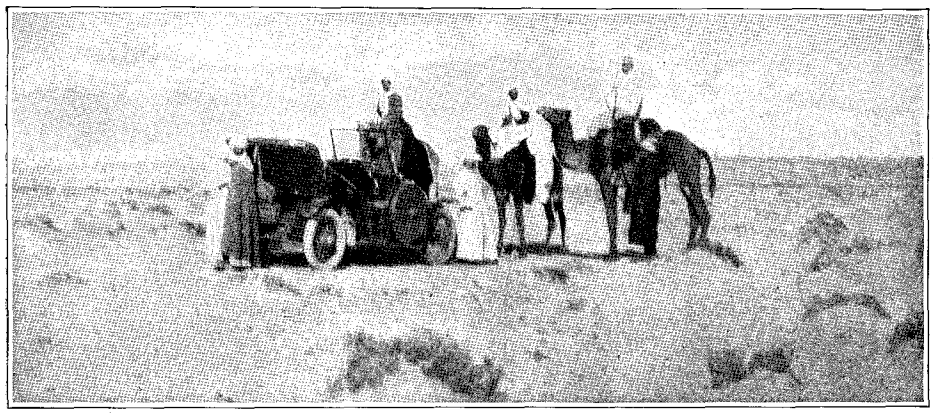

"Good-bye!" Where we turned back in the Sahara.—Page 283.

desert on an automobile would at the best be a rash thing to do, and not a little dangerous. But it was the "call of the wild," and we simply had to go. So we looked no more, but set about our preparations. These consisted of as many cans of petrol as we could possibly pack in and upon our car; a big sand shovel strapped on behind; a couple of dozen bottles of mineral water, a few loaves and some tins of little fishes; some ropes of goats' hair, light and extremely strong; and by the kindness of General Ropert, commanding the French forces of southern Algeria, a staff map, several letters of introduction, and, as escort, a native Spahi, in a long blue cloak, called Abd-el-Kader—"nom grandiose et difficile à porter comme celui de César," according to the historian of Africa. Our chauffeur and escort climbed up on the petrol cans, the latter with his rifle upright between his knees, and when we started we had the appearance of travelling peddlars, and were accorded the solemnly enthusiastic farewell of a forlorn hope. Our automobile journey in the Sahara was short, but it was what the French call accidented.

A few words first about the Sahara itself. One learns at school that its area is three and a half million square miles and its population two and a half million people—both of which statements, for all I know, are correct. But one gathers also the impressions that it is a vast flat plain of sand, which was once the bed of an enormous shallow ocean, and both these are incorrect. It is not a plain, but an undulation, varying in height from considerable depressions below sea-level to heights of thousands of feet. The average height of the Sahara is one thousand five hundred feet above sea-level—more than five hundred feet higher than Europe. And it has not been a sea since the materials of which it is composed were deposited by the primeval waters of the world. The latest and most careful student of its problems, M. Henri Schirmer, who relinquished with regret the theory of a Saharan sea, "which had accompanied me on my journey like a scientific axiom," writes:

"Instead of alluvial deposits recently deposited by the waters, we find land of every age, some as old as the oldest continents of the globe. . . . The Sahara has its granites like Brittany, its Devonian sandstone like England, its Cretacean chalks like Champagne, its chalky Eocenes like the London basin, its volcanic soil like Auvergne. Thus it does not differ geologically from the other parts of the globe."

And the most modest traveller, like ourselves, soon discovers that it is not the sandy plain of his school-days. He finds, from time to time, great or little spreading mounds, or dunes, of golden sand—called "barchans"—in which only a camel does not sink ankle-deep, and these, wind-created and wind-impelled, move forward almost like live things. Engineers employed in laying our desert railways have made costly, and even fatal, mistakes by not recognizing the fact, now established, that "desert dunes are not anchored or stationary hills of sand, but mobile masses, ad-

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vancing at a very appreciable rate in a definite direction." These dunes begin to move, according to another scientific observer, as soon as a light breeze blows; the air is perceptibly charged with sand in a moderate breeze; and during storms their progress may be nearly two inches an hour, while their average advance is fifty feet a year. Many a once flourishing oasis is now buried forever beneath the great sand-dunes, which, "ever slowly widening, silence all"; nothing stops their insidious advance; "in some localities extensive and prosperous settlements have been overwhelmed and blotted out of existence." They form, however, but a minute part of the surface of the desert. This is a mass of gypsum, clay, and stones, dotted over every few yards with mounds from six inches to three feet high. The origin of these is a tough bush of a kind of succulent samphire, with a small cream-colored acacia-like flower, and tamarisk with woody stem and gray leaf. These grow very slowly in dense close bosses, and the sand drifts and packs into them, forming a solid mass. But for these an automobile could travel fast in almost any direction. As it is, to go a hundred yards, a score or more of them have to be levelled, and since it takes five minutes' hard labor with the shovel to level a single one, any lengthy progress is very slow and fatiguing.

Finally, what has made the Sahara a desert? Let M. Schirmer answer:

"The sterility of the Sahara is due neither to the form of the land nor to its nature. The alluvium of sand, chalk, and gypsum, which covers the Algerian Sahara, constitutes equally the soil of the most fertile plains of the world. What causes the misery of the one and the wealth of the other is the absence or presence of water. . . . Deserts are what they are only through lack of humidity. . . . It is the climate which condemns them to sterility. It matters not whether they are formed of rock or alluvium or sand, if the sky does not pour down upon them the necessary water. Take from a fertile country a few inches of annual rainfall and you will have a steppe; a few inches more, and you will have the desert."

The date-palm alone makes human habitation possible. Its fruit is an almost sufficient food, and its shade protects life and cultivation and allows of the collection of water from a subterranean trickle. There are said to be four million date-palms in the Algerian oases alone, and to cut down a palm is the greatest crime or the cruellest punishment. Thus it is truly said that the Sahara dies of thirst in sight of the sea, and the unchanging sky of cobalt by day and indigo by night is at once its glory and its curse. And over it blows the all-destroying sirocco, bringing the sand which buries the hard-won refuges of human life, and, in the words of a medical investigator, "that irritation of the nervous system which is so pernicious to morality." "Calvinists and Puritans," he adds, with solemn quaintness, "will be found to resist the baleful effects of this wind better than persons of other persuasions"—a comforting reflection for intending automobilists from New England.

The idea, once popular in France, of turning the Sahara into an inland sea, at a cost of one hundred and fifty million francs, is wholly chimerical. The population of the Sahara is decreasing and its routes are disappearing year by year. No ray of hope illumines its eternal future. It is, indeed, alike for those who are condemned to sojourn and wander in its waste places and for those who venture there for a time, what the Arabs call it, *Blad-el-Khouf*, "The Land of Fear."

After a few miles the road already became almost impassable, so cut up was it with dangerous holes and slants, with no possible way of escaping them, owing to a deep ditch and dust-bank on either side. At last we manage to leave it and dodge along comfortably for a while, till we begin to tumble about in indescribable holes and ditches, feet deep, and have to take to the track again. At fourteen miles we strike the first sand-dune and stick fast. By tying the ropes round our back wheels we are able to reverse out, and by choosing a zig-zag route round dunes and bushes, and getting Abd-el-Kader to strap his rifle behind, and arm himself with the shovel to cut away the sandy humps of tamarisk, we manage to avoid the worst places and rush the rest. After an hour there was no more sand, but we had perforce to return to the track, which had now become a deep sunk course with high cuttings on either side—"the most dangerous and horrible road I

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have ever seen," writes my lady in her diary, and she has seen many bad ones. It is roasting hot, and deep-tinted glasses are an essential protection against the glare. The car rolls and lurches like a light ship in a beam sea, and our chauffeur declares he is sea-sick, and utters a throaty ejaculation of horror as the underworks of the car bang against some stony projection. But just when it seemed impossible either to go on or back, we saw our first halting-place ahead, and, thus encouraged, we desperately reached it.

This was Borj Saada, a strongly walled caravanserai, with no palms or shade or houses—just a square of walls entered by a gate and containing a filthy yard, stabling for beasts, a few bare rooms with matting on the floors, and the quarters where a numerous native family lived in dirt and squalor. In our room was a table and three chairs—that was all this rest-house provided for the traveller. We lunched off our own provisions, left some tins of petrol for our return, with many admonitions to take care of them, and started south again. For a while we got on better, but later the difficulties all came back, and we were seriously considering whether we should not turn back for good when a pleasant incident occurred.

Over the horizon behind us, and a mile to our left, a solitary camel with its rider came in sight, rapidly overtaking us. As soon as the rider saw us he turned in our direction, and proved to be a handsome young French officer riding a beautiful *mehari*, one of those thin, slender Touareg trotting camels with fine coats, small hump, and long neck, the aristocrats of their strange race. The officer, in scarlet coat, blue-and-gold cap, loose corduroy trousers buttoned round the ankles, with bare feet which he tucked into white canvas shoes before he dismounted, was Lieutenant Clerget de St. Leger, starting, after a period of leave, to join his regiment in the far south. He had sent his baggage on ahead, and was accompanied by an orderly and a native servant on two other camels. He would ride thus forty days, living on native food, having neither alcohol nor tobacco with him ("What is the use of beginning with them," he said; "they would so soon be finished"), sleeping where he could, often in the open desert, and was as gay with it all as only a Frenchman can be. He spoke Arabic fluently, knew the natives intimately, and liked them, thought nothing hardship, and joked at the obvious danger, both on his lonely journey and on the "petite promenade" his native regiment was about to make to carry French authority into an unknown and probably hostile region and bring back a topographical survey—a man of birth, education, and means, infinitely preferring this life to all the conditions of civilization. A little envy mingled with my liking for him, for like him—and Shelley—

> "I love all waste
> And solitary places, where we taste
> The pleasure of believing what we see
> Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be."

His gayety was infectious, and of course he assured us that the way was better farther south, so we started up again, and in our higher spirits soon left him behind, to meet again at the next *borj* for the night, where he promised us a rare feast. No gayety of the driver of an automobile, however, can make up for the deficiencies of the road, and whereas that of the morning's run was difficult, that of the afternoon became positively dangerous. To cut down a two-foot hump every three yards was impossible, even for a warrior named Abd-el-Kader, and the only alternative track was now of hard limestone with deep wheel-ruts, and therefore a middle part higher than the clearance of the underpart of the car. If we kept to the ruts a heavy knock against the fly-wheel warned us of imminent destruction of the machinery. I, therefore, my lady and the chauffeur walking, tried to drive, with the wheels of one side on the middle of the track and the other pair on the edge of the desert. But the two wheel-tracks were thus of very unequal heights, and the car first threatened to overturn on one side and then on the other. This was bad enough for the driver, but for those watching from behind it was terrifying. However, we kept on, and at half-past three, when we were once more on the verge of despair, our friend, comfortably progressing on his spongy-footed mount, joined us again and urged us to fresh efforts, with the result that we all forgathered at last at Borj Chegga for the night.

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That night in the desert we shall never forget. There were three bare rooms in a row opening out of each other. We spread our rugs in one, M. de St. Leger camped in the middle one, and our chauffeur and his orderly made themselves comfortable in the third. He held a consultation with his men, who had arrived with his baggage, while we spread the table. The feast is to be *mechoui,* a lamb roasted whole. It is bought, killed, cleaned, stuffed with herbs of an oniony-aromatic nature, and stretched out on a pole, its feet being tied to the pole at either end. The last time I had seen such a thing was when campaigning with the Greek troops, before their disastrous fight with the Turks in the Melouna Pass. A pit was dug in the ground and a fire of wood lighted. When this had died down and the pit was full of red-hot ashes, the pole was laid across the hole, the carcass turned over the ashes and basted continually with a kind of native butter, applied with a lamb's tail tied at the end of a stick. We all sat round, and the fire-lit dark faces watched the cooking greedily, like vultures watching funeral rites in a Siamese cemetery. At dinner our compressed soup was made with desert water, which supplied more than enough salt. Let my lady's diary continue: "Then the horrible sheep was brought in, wrapped in a cloth, and laid on the table with its head and white bulgy eyes in my plate. It occupies the whole table, and there is little room left for us. It is not done enough, and is spongy and strongly flavored and skinny, but otherwise excellent." Over the coffee our friend tells us thrilling stories of his life and adventures in the desert and elsewhere, and we go out and look at his camels. They are sitting each by a heap of chopped straw, lazily chewing. They can go for five days without water, when they drink twenty gallons at a time. Then we two walk away into the desert and the Eastern night. For the first time we seem to see the stars in perspective, the big ones near and the little ones far away. It is a glorious, still, cold night, the silence broken only by the grunting of the distant camels, the palms silhouetting the edge of the sky, the star-sown vault of heaven curving over us, and all the vague mystery of the East weighing upon us. We are far away from the world of men, and indeed mankind itself seems but an insignificant incident in this vast starry solitude.

We slept in our thick fur coats and under all our rugs. I had not known the desert was so cold at night, and at sunrise we turned out, to find that an enormous herd of camels, hundreds of them, belonging to many owners, had arrived, and were resting and watering. They were of every size, color, and condition, some weary, humpless, ragged, calloused beasts, others proud and spirited and smooth-haired, some suckling their crumpled offspring, and one wee one blinking at its new-born world, tied like a sack upon a big one's back, while its mother walked alongside and nuzzled it affectionately. The growling from all these creatures was wonderful—a deep, rich roar like the sea. They trailed away eastward across the desert, enveloped in dust and mystery, and we packed up and started south once more.

But it was our last effort. By nine o'clock we had made but a dozen miles, and the way grew worse and worse. Several times our fly-wheel had crashed against an obstruction—the undershield had long ago been knocked to pieces. It was clear that one of these blows might disable our transmission gear beyond the possibility of repair, in which case there would be nothing for it but to abandon the car, for towing would be impossible. Therefore, with great reluctance but undoubted discretion, we gave up all thought of Touggourt for the present, said good-by and godspeed to our gallant companion, saw him pass over the dim horizon to his share of training that strange *force noire,* of which France says so little but hopes so much when she thinks of her next war, and made our slow way, with great difficulty and almost constant anxiety, back to Biskra.

So the camel and the car passed each other for the last time, symbols of unmingling East and West, and went their ways, which lie forever far apart. And as we had unrolled the long picture of crowded city and silent ruin, forest and pasture, vine and palm and olive and orange and asphodel, snowy pass and burning desert, the strange Africa of to-day and the stranger relics of its greater past, so mile by mile we rolled it up again and brought its memories home.

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POMEGRANATE SEED

BY EDITH WHARTON

DEMETER
HECATE

PERSEPHONE
HERMES

In the vale of Eleusis

DEMETER

Hail, goddess, from the midmost caverned vale
Of Samothracia, where with darksome rites
Unnameable, and sacrificial lambs,
Pale priests salute thy triple-headed form,
Borne hither by swift Hermes o'er the sea:
Hail, Hecate, what word soe'er thou bring
To me, undaughtered, of my vanished child.

HECATE

Word have I, but no Samothracian wild
Last saw me, and mine aged footsteps pine
For the bleak vale, my dusky-pillared house,
And the cold murmur of incessant rites
Forever falling down mine altar-steps
Into black pools of fear . . . for I am come
Even now from that blue-cinctured westward isle,
Trinacria, where, till thou withheldst thy face,
Yearly three harvests yellowed to the sun,
And vines deep-laden yoked the heavier boughs—
Trinacria, that last saw Persephone.

DEMETER

Now, triune goddess, may the black ewe-lambs
Pour a red river down thine altar-steps,
Fruit, loaves and honey, at the cross-roads laid,
With each young moon by pious hands renewed,
Appease thee, and the Thracian vale resound
With awful homage to thine oracle!
What bring'st thou of Persephone, my child?

HECATE

Thy daughter lives, yet never sees the sun.

DEMETER

Blind am I in her blindness. Tell no more.

HECATE

Blind is she not, and yet beholds no light.

DEMETER

Dark as her doom is, are thy words to me.

HECATE

When the wild chariot of the flying sea
Bore me to Etna, 'neath his silver slope

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Herding their father's flocks three maids I found,
The daughters of the god whose golden house
Rears in the east its cloudy peristyle.
"Helios, our father," to my quest they cried,
"Was last to see Persephone on earth."

DEMETER

On earth? What nameless region holds her now?

HECATE

Even as I put thy question to the three,
Etna became as one who knows a god,
And wondrously, across the waiting deep,
Wave after wave the golden portent bore,
Till Helios rose before us.

DEMETER

O, I need
Thy words as the parched valleys need my rain!

HECATE

May the draught slake thee! Thus the god replied:
When the first suns of March with verdant flame
Relume the fig-trees in the crannied hills,
And the pale myrtle scents the rain-washed air—
Ere oleanders down the mountain stream
Pass the wild torch of summer, and my kine
Breathe of gold gorse and honey-laden sage;
Between the first white flowering of the bay
And the last almond's fading from the hill,
Along the fields of Enna came a maid
Who seemed among her mates to move alone,
As the full moon will mow the sky of stars,
And whom, by that transcendence, I divined
Of breed Olympian, and Demeter's child.

DEMETER

All-seeing god! So walks she in my dreams.

HECATE

Persephone (so spake the god of day)
Ran here and there with footsteps that out-shone
The daffodils she gathered, while her maids,
Like shadows of herself by noon fore-shortened,
On every side her laughing task prolonged;
When suddenly the warm and trusted earth
Widened black jaws beneath them, and therefrom
Rose Aïdes, whom with averted head
Pale mortals worship, as the poplar turns,
Whitening, her fearful foliage from the gale.
Like thunder rolling up against the wind
He dusked the sky with midnight ere he came,
Whirling his cloak of subterraneous cloud
In awful coils about the fated maid,
Till nothing marked the place where she had stood
But her dropped flowers—a garland on a grave.

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DEMETER

Where is that grave? There will I lay me down,
And know no more the change of night to day.

HECATE

Such is the cry that mortal mothers make;
But the sun rises, and their task goes on.

DEMETER

Yet happier they, that make an end at last.

HECATE

Behold, along the Eleusinian vale
A god approaches, by his feathered tread
Arcadian Hermes. Wait upon his word.

DEMETER

I am a god. What do the gods avail?

HECATE

Oft have I heard that cry—but not the answer.

HERMES

Demeter, from Olympus am I come,
By laurelled Tempe and Thessalian ways,
Charged with grave words of ægis-bearing Zeus.

DEMETER (*as if she has not heard him*)

If there be any grief I have not borne,
Go, bring it here, and I will give it suck . . .

HERMES

Thou art a god, and speakest mortal words?

DEMETER

Even the gods grow greater when they love.

HERMES

It is the Life-giver who speaks by me.

DEMETER

I want no words but those my child shall speak.

HERMES

His words are wingéd seeds that carry hope
To root and ripen in long-barren hearts.

DEMETER

Deeds, and not words, alone can quicken me.

HERMES

His words are fruitfuller than deeds of men.
Why hast thou left Olympus, and thy kind?

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DEMETER

Because my kind are they that walk the earth
For numbered days, and lay them down in graves.
My sisters are the miserable women
Who seek their children up and down the world,
Who feel a babe's hand at the faded breast,
And live upon the words of lips gone dumb.
Sorrow no footing on Olympus finds,
And the gods are gods because their hearts forget.

HERMES

Why then, since thou hast cast thy lot with those
Who painfully endure vain days on earth,
Hast thou, harsh arbitress of fruit and flower,
Cut off the natural increase of the fields?
The baffled herds, tongues lolling, eyes agape,
Range wretchedly from sullen spring to spring,
A million sun-blades lacerate the ground,
And the shrunk fruits untimely drop, like tears
That Earth at her own desolation sheds.
These are the words Zeus bids me bring to thee.

DEMETER

To whom reply: No pasture longs for rain
As for Persephone I thirst and hunger.
Give me my child, and all the earth shall laugh
Like Rhodian rose-fields in the eye of June.

HERMES

What if such might were mine? What if, indeed,
The exorable god, thy pledge confirmed,
Should yield thee back the daughter of thy tears?

DEMETER

Such might is thine?
Beyond Cithæron, see
The footsteps of the rain upon the hills.

HERMES

Tell me whence thy daughter must be led.

HECATE

So much at least it shall be mine to do.
If ever urgency hath plumed thy heels,
By Psyttaleia and the outer isles
Westward still winging thine ethereal way,
Beyond the moon-swayed reaches of the deep,
And that unvestiged midnight that confines
The verge of being, succourable god,
Haste to the river by whose sunless brim
Dark Aïdes leads forth his languid flocks.
There shalt thou find Persephone enthroned.
Beside the ruler of the dead she sits,
And shares, unwilling, his long sovereignty.
Thence lead her to Demeter and these groves.

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DEMETER

Round thy returning feet the earth shall laugh
As I, when of my body she was born!

HECATE

Lo, thy last word is as a tardy shaft
Lost in his silver furrow. Ere thou speed
Its fellow, we shall see his face again
And not alone. The gods are justified.

DEMETER

Ah, how impetuous are the wings of joy!
Swift comes she, as impatient to be gone!
Swifter than yonder rain moves down the pass
I see the wonder run along the deep.
The light draws nearer. . . . Speak to me, my child!

HECATE

I feel the first slow rain-drop on my hand . . .

She fades. Persephone comes, led by Hermes.

PERSEPHONE

How sweet the hawthorn smells along the hedge . . .
And, mother, mother, sweeter are these tears.

DEMETER

Pale art thou, daughter, and upon thy brow
Sits an estranging darkness like a crown.
Look up, look up! Drink in the light's new wine.
Feelest thou not beneath thine alien feet
Earth's old endearment, O Persephone?

PERSEPHONE

Dear is the earth's warm pressure under foot,
And dear, my mother, is thy hand in mine.
As one who, prisoned in some Asian wild,
After long days of cheated wandering
Climbing a sudden cliff, at last beholds
The boundless reassurance of the sea,
And on it one small sail that sets for home,
So look I on the daylight, and thine eyes.

DEMETER

Thy voice is paler than the lips it leaves.
Thou wilt not stay with me! I know my doom.

PERSEPHONE

Ah, the sweet rain! The clouds compassionate!
Hide me, O mother, hide me from the day!

DEMETER

What are these words? It is my love thou fearest.

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PERSEPHONE

I fear the light. I fear the sound of life
That thunders in mine unaccustomed ears.

DEMETER

Here is no sound but the soft-falling rain.

PERSEPHONE

Dost thou not hear the noise of birth and being,
The roar of sap in boughs impregnated,
And all the deafening rumour of the grass?

DEMETER

Love hear I, at his endless task of life.

PERSEPHONE

The awful immortality of life!
The white path winding deathlessly to death!
Why didst thou call the rain from out her caves
To draw a dying earth back to the day?
Why fatten flocks for our dark feast, who sit
Beside the gate, and know where the path ends?
O pitiless gods—that I am one of you!

DEMETER

They are not pitiless, since thou art here.

PERSEPHONE

Who am I, that they give me, or withhold?
Think'st thou I am that same Persephone
They took from thee?

DEMETER

Within thine eyes I see
Some dreadful thing—

PERSEPHONE

At first I deemed it so.

DEMETER

Loving thy doom, more dark thou mak'st it seem.

PERSEPHONE

Love? What is love? This long time I've unlearned
Those old unquiet words. There where we sit,
By the sad river of the end, still are
The poplars, still the shaken hearts of men,
Or if they stir, it is as when in sleep
Dogs sob upon a phantom quarry's trail.
And ever through their listlessness there runs
The lust of some old anguish; never yet
Hath any asked for happiness: that gift
They fear too much! But they would sweat and strive,
And clear a field, or kill a man, or even
Wait on some long slow vengeance all their days.

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DEMETER

Since I have sat upon the stone of sorrow,
Think'st thou I know not how the dead may feel?
But thou, look up; for thou shalt learn from me,
Under the sweet day, in the paths of men,
All the dear human offices that make
Their brief hour longer than the years of death.
Thou shalt behold me wake the sleeping seed,
And wing the flails upon the threshing-floor,
Among young men and maidens; or at dawn,
Under the low thatch, in the winnowing-creel,
Lay the new infant, seedling of some warm
Noon dalliance in the golden granary,
Who shall in turn rise, walk, and drive the plough,
And in the mortal furrow leave his seed.

PERSEPHONE

Execrable offices are theirs and thine!
Mine only nurslings are the waxen-pale
Dead babes, so small that they are hard to tell
From the little images their mothers lay
Beside them, that they may not sleep alone.

DEMETER

Yet other nurslings to those mothers come,
And live and love—

PERSEPHONE

Thou hast not seen them meet,
Ghosts of dead babes and ghosts of tired men,
Or thou wouldst veil thy face, and curse the sun!

DEMETER

Thou wilt forget the things that thou hast seen.

PERSEPHONE

More dreadful are the things thou hast to show.

DEMETER

Art thou so certain? Hard is it for men
To know a god, and it has come to me
That we, we also, may be blind to men.

PERSEPHONE

O mother, thou hast spoken! But for me,
I, that have eaten of the seed of death,
And with my dead die daily, am become
Of their undying kindred, and no more
Can sit within the doorway of the gods
And laughing spin new souls along the years.

DEMETER

Daughter, speak low. Since I have walked with men
Olympus is a little hill, no more.
Stay with me on the dear and ample earth.

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PERSEPHONE

The kingdom of the dead is wider still,
And there I heal the wounds that thou hast made.

DEMETER

And yet I send thee beautiful ghosts and griefs!
Dispeopling earth, I leave thee none to rule.

PERSEPHONE

O that, mine office ended, I might end!

DEMETER

Stand off from me. Thou knowest more than I,
Who am but the servant of some lonely will.

PERSEPHONE

Perchance the same. But me it calls from hence.

DEMETER

On earth, on earth, thou wouldst have wounds to heal!

PERSEPHONE

Free me. I hear the voices of my dead.
She goes.

DEMETER (*after a long silence*)

I hear the secret whisper of the wheat.

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QUALITY

By John Galsworthy

I KNEW him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots; inhabiting with his elder brother two little shops adjoined, in a small by-street—now no more, but then most fashionably placed in the West End.

That tenement had a certain quiet distinction; there was no sign upon its face that he made for any of the Royal Family—merely his own German name of Gessler Brothers; and in the window a few pairs of boots. I remember that it always troubled me to account for those unvarying boots in the window, for he made only what was ordered, reaching nothing down, and it seemed so inconceivable that what he made could ever have failed to fit. Had he bought them to put there? That too seemed inconceivable. He would never have tolerated in his house leather on which he had not worked himself. Besides, they were too beautiful—the pair of pumps, so inexpressibly slim, the leathers with cloth tops, making the water come into one's mouth, the tall brown riding boots with marvellous sooty glow, as if, though new, they had been worn a hundred years. Those pairs could only have been made by one who saw before him the Soul of Boot—so truly were they prototypes incarnating the very spirit of all footgear. These thoughts, of course, came to me later, though even when I was promoted to him, at the age of perhaps fourteen, some inkling haunted me of the dignity of himself and brother. For to make boots—such boots as he made—seemed to me then, and still seems to me, mysterious and wonderful.

I remember well my shy remark, one day, while stretching out to him my foot:

"Isn't it awfully hard to do, Mr. Gessler?"

And his answer, given with a sudden smile from out of the sardonic redness of his beard: "Id is an Ardt!"

Himself, he was a little as if made from leather, with his yellow crinkly face, and crinkly reddish hair and beard, and neat folds slanting down his cheeks to the corners of his mouth; and his guttural and one-toned voice; for leather is a sardonic substance, and stiff and slow of purpose. And that was the character of his face, save that his eyes, which were gray-blue, had in them the simple gravity of one secretly possessed by the Ideal. His elder brother was so very like him—though watery, paler in every way, with a great industry—that sometimes in early days I was not quite sure of him until the interview was over. Then I knew it was he, if the words "I will ask my brudder" had not been said; and that if they had, it was his elder brother.

When one grew old and wild and ran up bills, one somehow never ran them up with Gessler Brothers. It would not have seemed becoming to go in there, and stretch out one's foot to that blue iron-spectacled glance, owing him for more than—say—two pairs, just the comfortable reassurance that one was still his client.

For it was not possible to go to him very often—his boots lasted terribly, having something beyond the temporary—some, as it were, essence of boot stitched into them.

One went in, not as into most shops, in the mood of: "Please serve me, and let me go!" but restfully, as one enters a church; and, sitting on the single wooden chair, one waited—for there was never anybody there. Soon, over the top edge of that sort of well—rather dark, and smelling soothingly of leather—which formed the shop, there would be seen his face, or that of his elder brother, peering down. A guttural sound, and the tip-tap of bast slippers beating the narrow wooden stairs, and he would stand before one without coat, a little bent, in leather apron, with sleeves turned back, blinking—as if awakened from some dream of boots, or like an owl surprised in daylight, and annoyed at this interruption.

And one would say: "How do you do, Mr. Gessler? Could you make me a pair of Russia leather boots?"

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Without a word he would leave me, retiring whence he came, or into the other portion of the shop, and I would continue to rest in the wooden chair, inhaling the incense of his trade. Soon he would come back, holding in his thin, veined hand a piece of gold-brown leather. With eyes fixed on it, he would say: "What a beaudiful biece!" When I too had admired it, he would speak again. "When do you wand dem?" And I would answer: "Oh! as soon as you conveniently can." And he would say: "To-morrow fordnight?" Or if he were his elder brother: "I will ask my brudder!"

Then I would say: "Thank you! Good morning, Mr. Gessler."

"Goot morning!" he would murmur, still looking at the leather in his hand. And as I moved to the door, I would hear the tip-tap of his bast slippers restoring him up the stairs, to his dream of boots. But if it were some new kind of foot-gear that he had not yet made me, then indeed he would observe ceremony—divesting me of my boot, and holding it long in his hand, looking at it with eyes at once critical and loving, as if recalling the glow with which he had created it, and rebuking the way in which one had disorganized this masterpiece.

Then placing my foot on a piece of paper, he would two or three times tickle the outer edges with a pencil, and pass his nervous fingers over my toes, feeling himself into the heart of one's requirements.

I cannot forget that day on which I had occasion to say to him: "Mr. Gessler, that last pair of town walking boots creaked, you know."

He looked at me for a time without replying, as if expecting me to withdraw or qualify the statement, then said:

"Id shouldn'd 'ave greaked."

"It did, I'm afraid."

"You god dem wed before dey found demselves."

"No, I don't think so."

He lowered his eyes then, as if hunting for memory of those boots, and I felt sorry I had mentioned this grave thing.

"Zend dem back!" he said; "I will look at dem."

A feeling of compassion for my creaking boots surged up in me, so well could I imagine the sorrowful long curiosity of regard which he would bend on them.

"Zome boods," he said slowly, "are bad from birdt. If I can do noding wid dem, I dake dem off your bill."

Once (once only), I went absent-mindedly into his shop in a pair of boots bought in an emergency at some large firm's. He took my order without showing me any leather, and I could feel his eyes penetrating the inferior integument of my foot. At last he said:

"Dose are nod my boods."

The tone was not one of anger, nor of sorrow, not even of contempt, but there was in it something quiet that froze the blood. He put his hand down, and pressed a finger on the place where the left boot, endeavoring to be fashionable, was not quite comfortable.

"Id 'urds you dere," he said. "Dose big virms 'ave no self-respect. Drash!" And then, as if something had given way within him, he spoke long and bitterly. It was the only time I ever heard him discuss the conditions and hardships of his trade.

"Dey get id all," he said; "dey get id by adverdisement, nod by work. Dey dake it away from us, who lofe our boods. Id gomes to this—bresently I haf no work. Every year id gets less—you will see." And looking at his lined face I saw things I had never noticed before, bitter things and bitter struggle—and what a lot of gray there seemed suddenly in his red beard!

As best I could I explained the circumstances of the purchase of that ill-omened pair. But his face and voice made so deep impression that during the next few minutes I ordered many pairs. Nemesis fell! They lasted more terribly than ever. And I was not able conscientiously to go to him for nearly two years.

When at last I went I was surprised to find that outside one of the two little shops another name was painted, also that of a bootmaker—making of course for the Royal Family. The old familiar boots, no longer in dignified isolation, were huddled in the single window. Inside, the now contracted well of the one little shop was more scented and darker than ever. And it was longer than usual, too, before a face peered down, and the tip-tap of the bast slippers began. At last he stood before me, and, gazing through those rusty iron spectacles, said:

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"Mr. ——, isn'd it?"

"Ah! Mr. Gessler," I stammered, "but your boots are *too* good, really! See, these are quite decent still!" And I stretched out to him my foot. He looked at it.

"Yes," he said, "beople do nod wand good boods, id seems."

To get away from his reproachful eyes and voice, I hastily remarked: "What have you done to your shop?"

He answered quietly: "Id was too exbensif. Do you wand some boods?"

I ordered three pairs, though I had only wanted two, and quickly left. I had, I do not know quite what feeling of being part, in his mind, of a conspiracy against him; or not perhaps so much against him as against his idea of boot. One does not, I suppose, care to feel like that; for it was again many months before my next visit to his shop, paid, I remember, with the feeling: "Oh! well, I can't leave the old boy—so here goes! Perhaps it'll be his elder brother!"

For his elder brother, I knew, had not character enough to reproach me, even dumbly.

And to my relief, in the shop, there did appear to be his elder brother, handling a piece of leather.

"Well, Mr. Gessler," I said, "how are you?"

He came close, and peered at me.

"I am breddy well," he said slowly; "but my elder brudder is dead."

And I saw that it was indeed himself—but how aged and wan! And never before had I heard him mention his brother. Much shocked, I murmured: "Oh! I am sorry!"

"Yes," he answered, "he was a good man, he made a good bood; but he is dead." And he touched the top of his head, where the hair had suddenly gone as thin as it had been on that of his poor brother, to indicate, I suppose, the cause of death. "He never god over losing de oder shop. Do you wand any boods?" And he held up the leather in his hand: "It's a beaudiful biece."

I ordered several pairs. It was very long before they came—but they were better than ever. One simply could not wear them out. And soon after that I went abroad.

It was over a year before I was again in London. And the first shop I went to was my old friend's. I had left a man of sixty, I came back to one of seventy-five, pinched and worn and tremulous, who genuinely, this time, did not at first know me.

"Oh! Mr. Gessler," I said, sick at heart; "how splendid your boots are! See, I've been wearing this pair nearly all the time I've been abroad; and they're not half worn-out, are they?"

He looked long at my boots—a pair of Russia leather, and his face seemed to regain steadiness. Putting his hand on my instep, he said:

"Do dey vid you here? I 'ad drouble wid dat bair, I remember."

I assured him that they had fitted beautifully.

"Do you wand any boods?" he said. "I can make dem quickly; id is a slack dime."

I answered: "Please, please! I want boots all round—every kind!"

"I will make a vresh model. Your food must be bigger." And with utter slowness, he traced round my foot, and felt my toes, only once looking up to say:

"Did I dell you my brudder was dead?"

To watch him was painful, so feeble had he grown; and I was glad to get away.

I had given those boots up, when one evening they came. Opening the parcel, I set the four pairs out in a row. Then one by one I tried them on. There was no doubt about it. In shape and fit, in finish and quality of leather, they were the best he had ever made me. And in the mouth of one of the town walking boots I found his bill. The amount was the same as usual, but it gave me a big shock. He had never before sent it in till quarter day. I flew downstairs, and wrote a check, and posted it at once with my own hand.

A week later, passing the little street, I thought I would go in and tell him how splendidly the new boots fitted. But when I came to where his shop had been, his name was gone. Still there, in the window, were the slim pumps, the patent leathers with cloth tops, the sooty riding boots.

I went in, very much disturbed. In the two little shops again made one was a young man with an English face.

"Mr. Gessler in?" I said.

He gave me a strange, ingratiating look.

"No, sir," he said, "no. But we can attend to anything with pleasure. We've

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taken the shop over. You've seen our name, no doubt, next door. We make for some very good people."

"Yes, yes," I said; "but Mr. Gessler?"

"Oh!" he answered; "he's dead."

"Dead! But I only received these boots from him last Wednesday week."

"Ah!" he said; "it was a shockin' go. Poor old man starved 'imself."

"Good God!"

"Slow starvation, the doctor called it! You see he went to work in such a way! Would keep the shop on; wouldn't have a soul touch his boots except himself. When he got an order, it took him such a time. People won't wait. He lost everybody. And there he'd sit, goin' on and on—I will say that for him—not a man in London made a better boot! But look at the competition! He never advertised! Would 'ave the best leather, and do it all 'imself. Well, there it is. What could you expect, with his ideas?"

"But starvation——!"

"That may be exaggeration, in a way—but I know myself he was sitting over his boots day and night, to the very last. I used to see him. Never gave himself time to eat; never had a penny in the house. All went in rent and leather. How he lived so long I don't know. He regular let his fire go out. He was a character. But he made good boots."

"Yes," I said, "he made good boots."

And I turned and went out quickly, for I did not want that youth to know that I could hardly see.

STAR-SONG

By G. E. Woodberry

I WOKE in the desert rude
O'er-hung by the star-sweet sky,
And ever the radiant multitude
In the silence drew more nigh,
As if on my eyes to brood,
And inward glory nurse,
And out of the heart of the universe
Soared forth my singing cry.

"We are young—our song up-springing
The crystal blue along,
Creation's morning singing,—
It was but children-song,
Melodiously ringing,
Mysteriously forewarning.
The realm beyond the morning
We infinitely throng.

"We sit in our burning spheres
Illimitably hung;
By the speed of light we measure the years
On purple ether flung;
Without a shadow time appears,
A calendar of echoing lights
That flame and dusk from depths and heights,
And all our years are young.

"We are borne through darkness streaming
Wherein our glory glides;
We dower the deep with the beaming
Where prophecy resides;

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Forevermore we are dreaming,
Still in the springtime blossom
Of thoughts that light our bosom
And beat our glowing sides.

"Wide the abyss; we span it,
Who showering a bright spark came;
And forever we smite it and fan it
Forth from the forging flame,—
Life, flower of the planet,
Flower of the fire, supernal,
Burning, blooming eternal,—
A million names are his name.

"We tremble; we thrill heaven's ocean
With the myriad-glittering quest;
Aspiration and devotion
From the prime were our brooding nest;
And youth,—'tis breathed emotion,
A seeing and a hearkening,
A gleaming and a darkening,
And a whispering to the breast.

"Then with bright hands uplifted
We strike the thousand lyres;
The music, on dreams drifted,
Pours all the world's desires;
And ever the song is sifted
From the heart of youth forecasting
The unknown everlasting
That bathes us and inspires.

"We gaze on the far flood flowing,
Unimaginably free,
Multitudinous, mystical, glowing,
But all we do not see;
And a rapture is all our knowing,
That on fiery nerves comes stealing,
An intimate revealing
That all is yet to be.

"When sheathed and glacial o'er us
Arcturus courses cold,
And dry and dark before us
Aldebaran is rolled,
Far-clustering orbs in chorus
Shall light the pealing sky,
And throne to throne reply,
'The heavens grow not old.'"

Round the desert wild and eerie
The starry echoes clung;
In a region weird and dreary
The golden song was sung;
Over lands forlorn and weary,
Where the drifting white sand only
Drifts anew the sand-wreath lonely,
The radiant silence hung.

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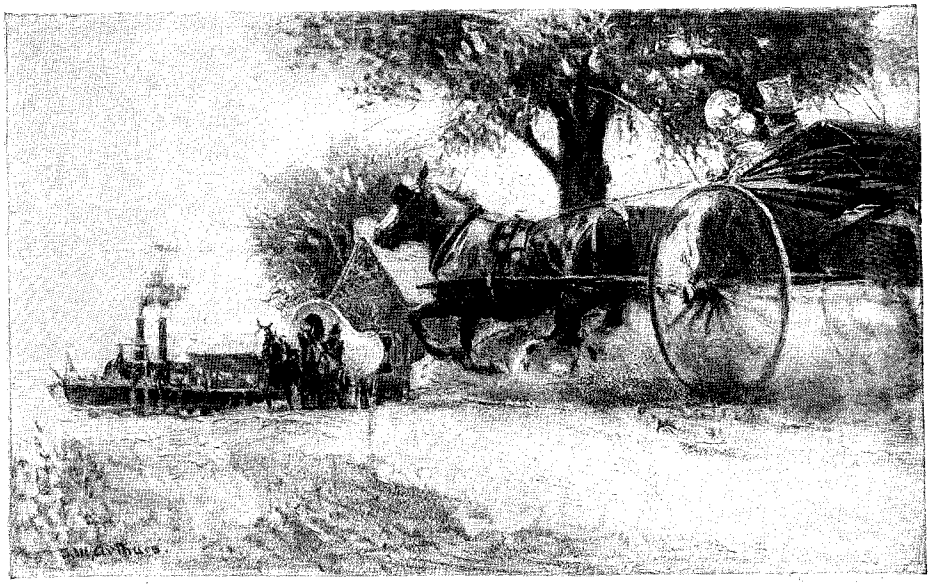

Down the street might be seen a galloping horse . . . indicating the approach of other belated passengers.—Page 301.

EARLY STEAMBOAT DAYS

By Stanley M. Arthurs

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

UNTIL the quiet and unheralded voyage of the *Clermont* up the Hudson River, nothing radically new and permanent in modes of travel had developed for centuries. Water transportation had been circumscribed by the forces of the winds, tides, and currents, unless the traveller employed galley-slaves, or himself plied the oars. In journeys by land, whether in the time of Pharaoh or Washington, the physical exertions of the traveller, those of his fellowman or of beasts, furnished the only power of transit. Aerial travel was still reserved for the fortunate possessor of the magic carpet of Tangu or the dark, uncanny patrons of the broomstick train.

It is not known who first attempted to remove these restrictions upon locomotion, but its lasting achievement was not effected until this momentous voyage up the Hudson in 1807. Previously there had been many sporadic attempts by experimenters, who were presumed to be either hopelessly insane or suffering from some form of hallucination.

The record of steam navigation dates, certainly, as far back as the year 1707. There are more or less traditional accounts of steamboats as early as 1543. Just one hundred years before Fulton's success, a French physician, by the name of Papin, navigated the river Fulda, in Hanover, Prussia, with a boat employing steam-driven paddle-wheels. His creation was, however, thought to be anomalous and dangerous to other craft, and met an early and summary fate, being torn to pieces by a mob of boat-men, and Dr. Papin did not venture to build another.

Shortly after the American Revolution a craze to navigate by steam possessed inventors both in this country and abroad. There existed then an all-abiding faith in modes and customs that had stood centuries of

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The important points of junction between steamboat and stage routes soon became scenes of picturesque life.—Page 301.

usage and this was only strengthened and confirmed by each failure or apparent failure of the inventive pioneers of the new era. Yet among the investigators the idea of using steam as a motive power continued both persistent and wide-spread; and in many cases, without the knowledge of others working upon the same idea, they were simultaneously experimenting upon the lakes and rivers from New England to Georgia, testing their many crude mechanisms which evoked nothing save scorn and ridicule or pity from the beholders.

Several American inventors, seeking a more favorable field for their endeavors, soon found their way to Europe. Rumsey had moved his experiments, in 1789, from the Potomac to English waterways. It was his proposal to build a vessel that would reach America in fifteen days without sails, and his adherents predicted that "this wonder, when executed, would introduce into commerce as great a change as the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope." Their expectation was not then realized, but, none the less, wonders were accomplished by steam-engines even in that day and generation. In the year 1804 Oliver Evans, of Delaware, ran his "*Eructor Amphibolis*" through the streets of Philadelphia, from about the site of the present public buildings to the Schuylkill River, with power generated entirely by fire and water. Upon reaching the water's edge, he launched his machine, and, by the use of a paddle-wheel in the stern, proceeded down the Schuylkill, and up the Delaware for sixteen miles, outdistancing all vessels that were under sail and struggling against a head-wind. This amphibious creation was the occasion of intense excitement, though steamboats were not unheard of upon the Delaware even at that time.

On that river the first steamboat passenger service in the world was established by one John Fitch. A person travelling from Philadelphia to New York during the summer months of 1790 could have embarked on his unnamed boat at the Arch Street Ferry and be rowed by its steam-engine as far as Trenton, for it had no paddle-wheels, and instead used steam-propelled oars. It is recorded that this curious barge made between two and three thousand miles in its trips, and attained a speed of nine miles an hour. Congress, then meeting in Philadelphia, adjourned its session to witness the departure of this boat upon its maiden voyage. Washington and Franklin were probably among its first passengers, for they both conceded the practical utility of navigation by steam. The spirit of opposition and unbelief, however, was sufficient to overwhelm even a demon-

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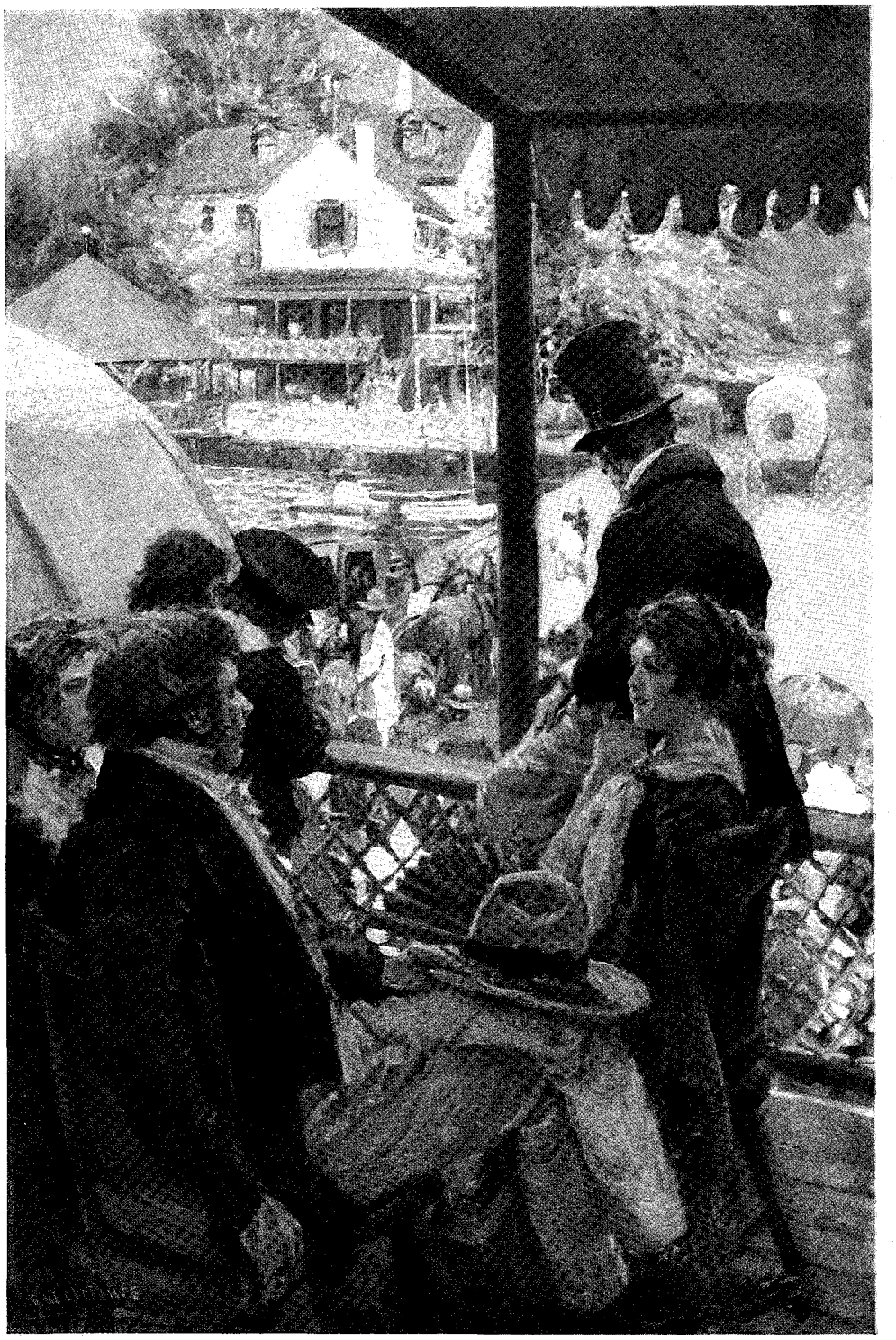

Drawn by Stanley M. Arthurs.

The Village Landing. 298-A

The villagers could obtain glimpses of the gay fashions of the city or of Europe.—Page 301.

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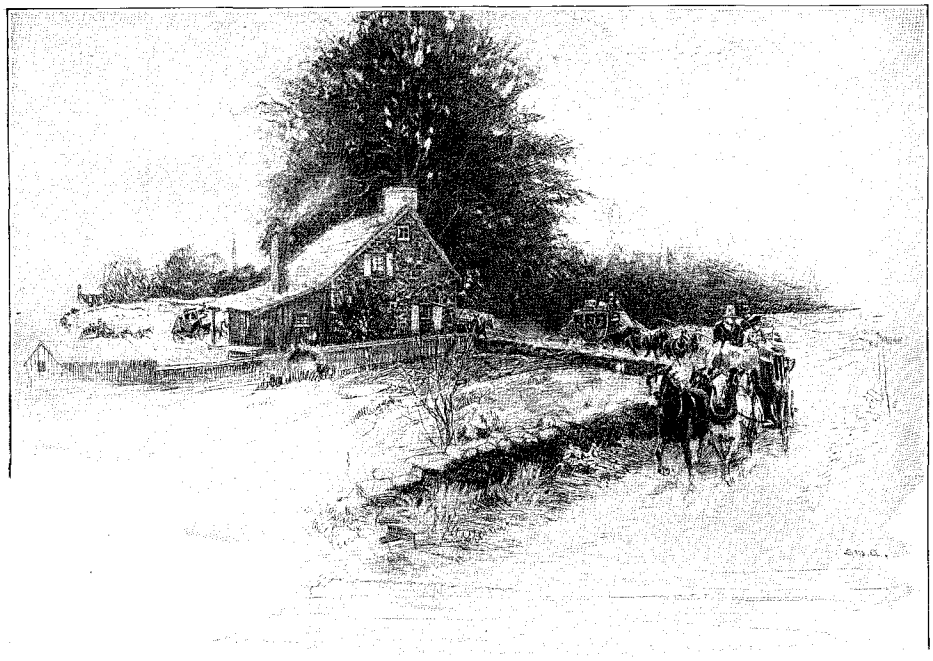

The well-laden caravan wended its way through the village street out into the country-side.—Page 301.

strated fact, and this enterprise was allowed to lapse in the autumn of that year.

Through all these days of trial for the believers in the adaptability of steam to navigation, the owners of sailing packets placidly pursued their vocation. Uncertain as such craft were known to be, travellers, weary of rattling coaches, were glad to patronize them between points permitting their use, even if they did not know precisely when the sloops would sail, nor when once started how soon they might hope to arrive.

A voyage from New York to Albany, under best conditions of wind and tide, could be made in twenty-four hours, if the vessel suffered no accident; but many hours might elapse after the appointed sailing time, before the elements would permit a vessel to start, and the vagaries of wind and tide often prolonged a voyage for a week or even a much longer time. The route of these Hudson River sloops was found to be a very uncertain and dangerous one, in which perils, both real and unnatural, were encountered, and the prudent Dutch burgher would consider well before risking a passage through the perilous Tappan Zee and the haunted Highlands, where beings, wild and vindictive, sought to overwhelm any intruding craft.

These legendary terrors of Diedrich Knickerbocker's time were fully realized by the skippers of that later day who met the *Clermont* in the dark defiles of the Palisades on the evening of her initial journey through them. The worst mythical terrors had now assumed tangible form in this diabolical craft enshrouded in smoke and sparks, which was directly approaching in spite of contrary wind and current. If the passengers and crews of other crafts were not entirely panic stricken, its nearer approach must have been reassuring, for a letter written by a passenger on that first trip narrates that the whole party of men and women, impressed with the romantic beauty of the time and place, despite their engrossment in their extraordinary means of conveyance, joined in singing, perhaps in honor of Fulton's lineage, "The Banks and Braes of Bonny Doon," and throughout the melody the high tenor voice of Fulton himself rang rich and clear.

After this voyage of approximately one hundred and fifty miles by steam alone, the fickle attitude of the public changed from absolute disapproval to enthusiastic approbation. A few days after Fulton's achievement, John Stevens, in his boat, the *Phœnix*,

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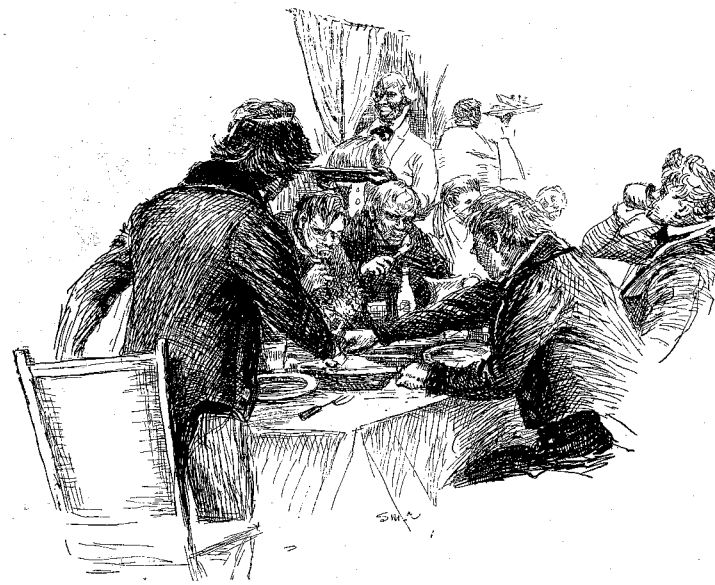
steamed into New York from Hoboken, with intent to share the profits of navigating the Hudson. This was opposed by the famous Fulton-Livingston monopoly, which was thus forced to begin its fight for existence almost before the *Clermont* had re-

companions meanwhile watching from a safe distance. Scarcely was he on board, however, before the captain appeared, followed by a pet monkey. This was an animal entirely unknown to him. His worst fears were visualized. In terror, he fled,



Nowhere was the American mania for speed more evidenced than during these feasts.—Page 303.

turned from her first voyage. Because of this restriction of her boats, New Jersey retaliated with an act forbidding Fulton's boats to navigate the waters of that State.

In June, 1809, the *Phœnix*, with Stevens at the helm, deserted this scene of contention and braved a sea voyage around the capes to Philadelphia to be put into service over the route of Fitch's steamboat, and was, therefore, the first steamboat to venture upon the open sea.

The demand throughout the country for the new packets grew more rapidly than the few builders could supply. The owners of sailing packets, and loyal adherents of methods hallowed by centuries of use, sought in vain to prevent this usurpation. The superstitious still believed that the power engendered by fire and water belonged to the devil.

It is told of one villager, whose mind was possessed of this fear, that he ventured on board the first steamboat that arrived at his village to investigate this alleged connivance with the powers of darkness, his yelling the news that the devil himself was aboard and had made the vessel go.

Within four years after the *Clermont's* appearance, a steamboat had journeyed from Pittsburg to New Orleans, through stretches of wilderness. This was before the establishment of the first regular steamboat passenger service in Great Britain. The travellers from Europe, who had never seen a steamboat, marvelled at the accomplishments of steam and paddle-wheels in America. It was said that visiting Englishmen laughed at everything American except its cotton, its money, and its steamboats.

The dangerous passage of "Hell Gate," whose turbulent waters and treacherous rocks had caused the shipwreck of so many sailing craft, deterred steamboat promoters from attempting to navigate Long Island Sound previous to the War of 1812. With the opening of hostilities, the added danger of British cannon and capture had further delayed the experiment. The *Fulton* was made for this purpose in 1814 at a cost of ninety thousand dollars; but her first at-

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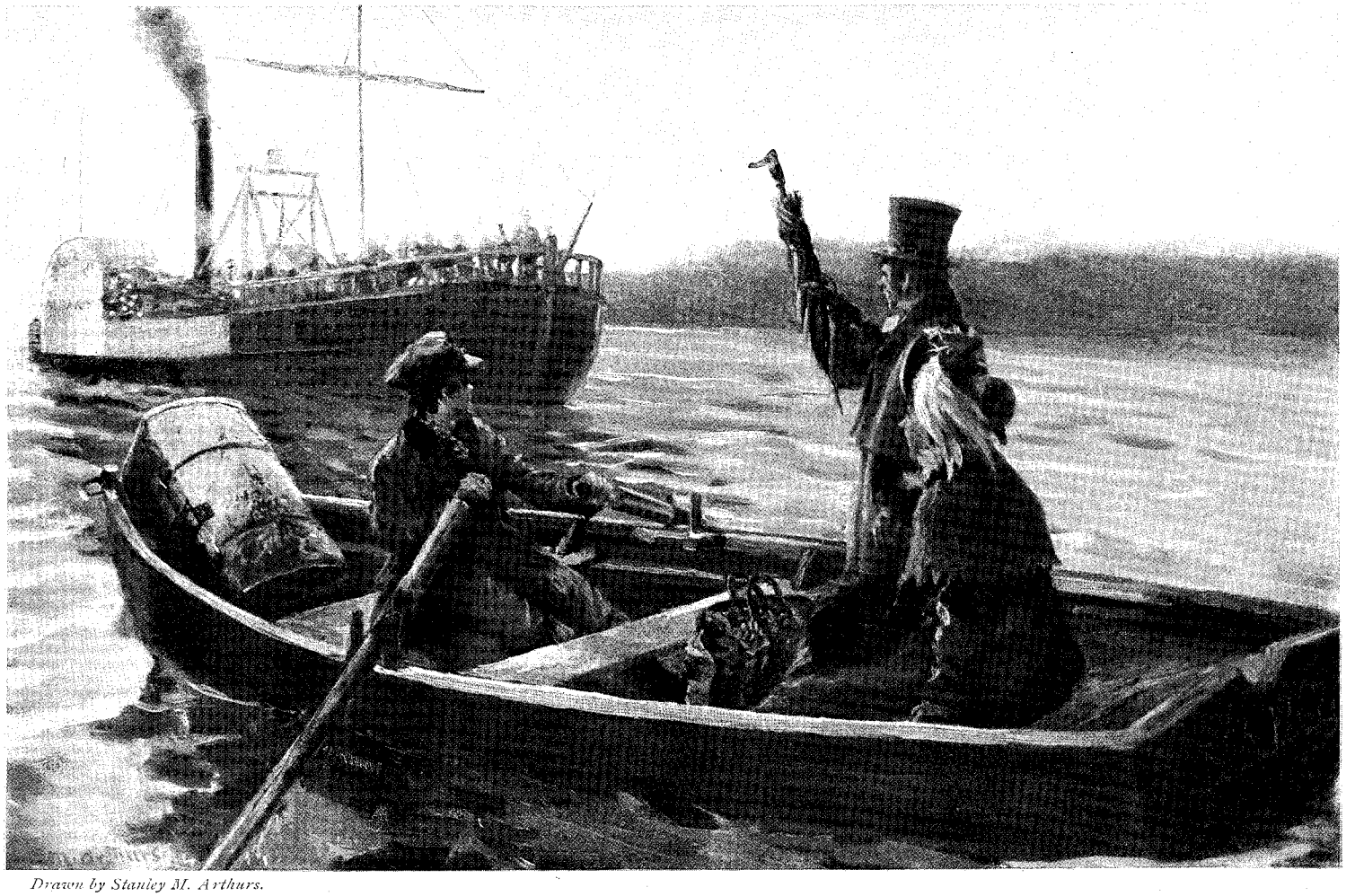

Drawn by Stanley M. Arthurs.

On the river these way-passengers would come out in row-boats.—Page 301.

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tempt was not made until the spring of 1815. About daybreak on the 25th of March of that year she got under way, bound for New Haven. It was her first run that season; her engines were not in the best of condition, and she was compelled to burn hard wood for fuel, as the resinous pine could not be purchased in New York. It was only by occasionally stopping the engine that she maintained sufficient steam pressure in her boiler. Notwithstanding such difficulties, she safely navigated the dangerous strait, and entered the harbor of New Haven at 4.30 that afternoon. Her safe arrival, in defiance of all dangers, was acclaimed far and near as "a proud triumph of human ingenuity."

The *Fire Fly* made the first steam passage around Point Judith to Providence in 1817. The arrival of "these establishments" and the inauguration of the new era at the different ports on the Sound occasioned great excitement; both the houses and hill-tops were covered with people eager to see the wonderful vessel. The early captains did not disdain, however, to make all use of a fair breeze, and their boats were usually either sloop or schooner rigged. Even with the aid of both steam and sail, the speediest sailing packets could pass them in a fair breeze and be the first to arrive in port. Some of the packets at first even offered to carry their patrons for nothing if this was not accomplished.

The exacting punctuality with which steamboats began their trips was a troublesome change for many travellers. At the moment of departure some struggling, puffing, bundle-laden mortals were usually in evidence, frantically endeavoring to get on board. Or down the street might be seen a galloping horse, a chaise and a cloud of dust, indicating the approach of other belated passengers. But promptly and with no regard to these laggards the steamboats started and the tardy ones were left to try another day.

The important points of junction between steamboat and stage routes soon became scenes of picturesque life in those now distant days. An important one was New Castle on the Delaware. Here all passengers for the South and West from points in the North would take the stages across the peninsula fourteen miles to Frenchtown, there again to resume travel by steam to Baltimore. By a code of signals the captain would indicate the number of through passengers to be transported, and the requisite number of coaches would be in waiting when the vessel docked. At times the number of wayfarers far exceeded the carrying capacity of these vehicles, and the struggles of the passengers to find a place for themselves and for every bandbox and bundle taxed the ingenuity and patience of the captain and the stage-coach proprietor. The excitement usually brought the villagers to the water-front. No coach, no matter how crammed it might be, was allowed to start before every passenger and bundle had been stowed away. At last, though the delay may have been for an hour, the train of perhaps twenty coaches would start, and the well-laden caravan wended its way through the village streets out into the country-side, and woe to the hindermost on a dusty day.

The shrill call of a steamboat whistle, or the appearance riverward of a heavy cloud of smoke, awoke the most sleepy burgh to activity. There were great quantities of wood to be transferred to decks; and meanwhile the villagers could obtain glimpses of the gay fashions of the city or of Europe.

Although the steamboats carried most of the passenger traffic and express to points along the rivers, sloops and schooners were still employed in handling most of the freight and farm products. At harvest time the village landings on the many creeks and rivers were filled with a forest of masts and rigging, and its streets at night were alive with these river and coastwise sailors. Lumbering wagon-trains were busy bringing in the corn and wheat from many miles of inland country.

When steamboat landings were few, the boats would stop at any point to take on board a signalling passenger, just as the stage-coaches did. On the river these way-passengers would come out in row-boats into mid-stream to climb on board. There are stories of many a runaway couple, who thus escaped a pursuing parent.

The mania for speed began with the harnessing of steam to vehicles of transportation. Its impetus was felt even in the ancient types of conveyance on land. The advertisements of stage-coach lines before the advent of steam represent the horses as moderately jogging along; soon afterward

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they assumed the appearance of violently galloping as if to outdo their boisterous steam competitors. Steam power was constantly making new records in speed and in shortening the time between points on the different waterways. New York and Albany were about twelve hours apart in 1823. In the same year there was public rejoicing at Louisville when a steamboat arrived there from New Orleans in fifteen days. Four years afterward the steamboat *Huntress* made the voyage in eight days. In the days of sailing vessels only, this voyage up the river occupied four months.

When a speed of twelve miles an hour had been attained it was with much commiseration that some editors referred to the days a few years previous when six to nine miles an hour had been the records of the faster steamboats, and when contrary winds and currents had proved the undoing of the smaller tubs.

Contests between boats for laurels of speed waxed greater as the engines developed in power. To maintain supremacy, or to gain it at all hazards, seems to have been a motto. The security of the boats and the lives of the passengers were alike disregarded—inflammable cargoes such as lard and hams were often requisitioned to quicken the fires of pine logs and knots. When this supply of fuel was exhausted during a race, the interior wood-work of the boats even had been ripped into pieces and fed to the flames. At the finish sometimes the victor would arrive at its wharf a mere skeleton of itself, but with great honor to the captain and to its proud owners.

The ill-famed high-pressure engines were used principally on the Western steamboats. Their propensity for exploding was greatly increased in these struggles for speed. Racing often resulted in collisions in the narrow channels, sometimes with some emigrant-laden raft floating westward. Hidden snags or roots were another imminent source of danger, whether in racing or not, and it became almost a miracle to escape accident or calamity on a steamboat voyage in the west. It was reported in 1832 that "a voyage from Liverpool to New York was a party of pleasure when compared to that from New Orleans to Cincinnati." Out of nine steamboats leaving New Orleans in one day for points up the river, but three arrived without accident. The Western steamboats were larger and of more hasty construction than the Eastern boats, and were considered old and useless after five years' service. Aboard them human lives were lost, not by hundreds but by thousands. During Lafayette's last visit to this country he was a passenger on a boat that went down after running upon a snag near New Orleans. The veteran lost his baggage and barely escaped with his life.

In the East low-pressure engines were more in vogue and less dangerous. To remove the fears even of the most timid and conservative travellers, the enterprising promoters of a line running on the Hudson introduced, in the year 1825, a welcome innovation known as "safety barges." These elaborate flatboats were equipped with every convenience of a steamboat, and towed by the steam leviathans, thus possessing every attraction of that mode of conveyance, with the signal advantage of securing absolute peace of mind for their patrons. The flues and boilers of the steamboat might now "collapse" at their time and pleasure without so much as disarranging the spectacles of the dames or the coiffures of the young ladies. Steamboats often bore such portentous names as *Vesuvius* or *Vulcan;* but at the stern of the barges floated banners bearing the gentler names of *Lady Clinton* or *Lady Van Rensselaer*.

In some boats the cabins and saloons were finished in the finest mahogany and contained silken draperies and Brussels carpets; the ladies' parlors were provided with the popular new "rocking" chairs; table china was imported, decorated with a picture of the boat; oil-paintings adorned the walls, and monogrammed linen the tables—all gave to travel touches of luxury hitherto unknown.

Externally these boats were no less ornate. Painted in many colored stripes of green and yellow, black or scarlet, with trimmings of blue or white, they were fully as captivating to the youth of the villages and riverside as the modern circus poster.

There appeared a maritime wonder equipped with a calliope organ whose wheezing notes drawn from the boiler succeeded in arousing the envy of all competitive lines. Its glory was but transitory, however, for the other boats succeeded in making better time. Art was again sacrificed to utility.

The popularity of any steamboat depended as much upon its cuisine as upon its at-

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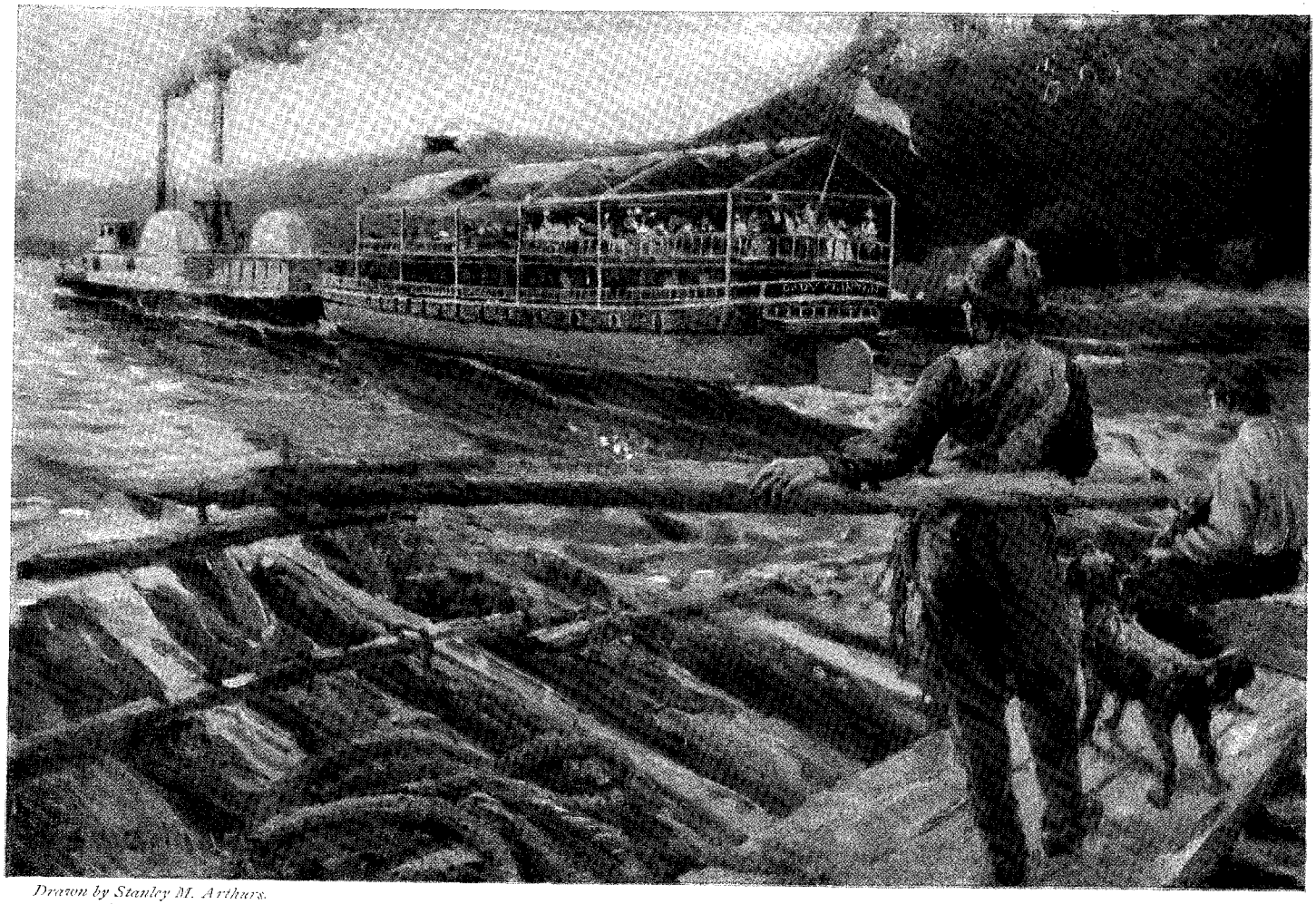

Drawn by Stanley M. Arthurs.

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The Safety Barge.

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tainments in speed and its palatial furnishings. Abundant supplies of the best food; the best chefs and regiments of waiters catered to the throngs aboard the boats. Not infrequently the larger ones carried five hundred passengers, and it was often necessary to serve the meals twice.

The ladies were first allowed to take their places at the head table with their escorts; then followed a rush of the unattached eager to get a place at the first table. Nowhere was the American mania for speed more evidenced than during these feasts. They were over in a very few minutes. No thought was given to precedence or position; not a word was heard above the boisterous clatter of chinaware, knives, forks, and spoons. To quote an English writer's description, it was "entrant omnes, adeunt omnes, exeunt omnes."

Talking may not have been general at meal time, but it was resumed after that function. The various opinions of these motley steamboat constituents, gathered from all quarters of a newly organized nation, furnished ample material for controversy. The pros and cons of political problems were argued furiously. Such bitterness and internal strife prevailed that visitors from other lands recorded their opinions that the Republic could not long hold together.

To escape this turmoil the ladies could retire to their parlor. Thence came peaceful strains of song or the rhythmic music of the recently introduced "waltz."

On boats traversing the long and tortuous routes of the Western waterways, where voyages of a thousand miles and more were made, gambling was commonly indulged in the secluded quarters of the boats. At the faro-table or in a "friendly" game of cards the croupiers wrought the ruin of many a planter whose faith in luck endured until the last of his season's income had been squandered. These episodes were sometimes followed by scenes of violence and crime.

The entire security with which women could travel without a companion was another distinctive feature of the steamboat era in this country. Without regard either to her dress or appearance, any woman was assured of every courtesy and protection in her journeys. This was true especially in the West and in the undeveloped sections of the South. This characteristic of American life bore a marked contrast to conditions existing in Europe at the time, and was duly noted by European travellers.

With the coming of darkness the dining saloon again became the centre of interest, and promptly at nine o'clock it was converted into a huge dormitory for men. The room was lined on each side with narrow beds, which had been let down at night, and they were arranged in tiers of three. If the ladies' compartment proved to be too small for their needs, as much of the main cabin as was necessary was appropriated and curtained off. After the ladies had been provided for, the remaining space was raffled off among the men, with good-natured acceptance of the luck that befell them. A numbered slip signified that the fortunate chooser might occupy the berth of the corresponding number, but a blank bit of paper meant nothing more promising than a table-top for a bed, or an uneasy snooze in a chair.

The darkness without and the flickering, uncertain shadows cast by the argand lamps within did not lessen the fears of impending accident that ever haunted these river passengers. To be prepared, as far as possible, for any emergency, many travellers refused to change their attire at night, and were ready for instant flight, should there occur any untoward sound or motion of the boat.

The weary night hours were usually so filled with mingled associations of groaning machinery, of bawling commands of captain and pilot, the crying of children, the endless thumping of logs of wood on their way to the furnace, and the ceaseless pat-pat-pattering of the paddle-wheels and racking of boat that sound repose was seldom enjoyed.

Undoubtedly they were the most potent factors in the early development of this country. Their ministrations began when our Republic was composed of but seventeen States, all but three of which skirted or were very near the Atlantic coast. Westward lay an almost untouched wilderness of a still new world. In traversing this great expanse of country, the government's expedition, under charge of Lewis and Clark, was absent more than two years. To reach the furthermost settlements upon the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, the emigrants could, with

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relative ease, float down these streams with raft or boat, but their communication with the East, or return by means of sailing craft up the same rivers, was extremely slow and irksome. Within a few years this condition was surmounted by these puffing steam craft, and throughout great stretches of country, where still the narrow Indian trail had been but little improved upon for overland travel, the steamboats were busy uniting the things of the East with those of the West.

The pros and cons of political problems were argued furiously.—Page 303.

The greatest distinction of the steamboat lies in the fact that it began the modern era of industrial and commercial upheaval, and the scant century of its existance has been so filled with accomplishments in chemistry and mechanics, and the control and use of many forces of nature heretofore unconsidered that man's entire relation to the world has been changed. The seeming impossibilities of the past have been so frequently overcome that there is an almost limitless promise for the future. The mark of severance between the past and the present was the wake of these first struggling steamboats which were soon to encompass all navigable waterways of the globe.

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THE RACE FOR THE SOUTH POLE

FUTURE OF POLAR EXPLORATION

BY FRIDTJOF NANSEN

THE North Pole has been conquered by American enterprise. What of the South Pole?

Perhaps in this very hour two European expeditions from two kindred nations are there, or are approaching it. The one is the British expedition under Captain Scott, the excellent leader of the previous *Discovery* expedition to the Antarctic—the other is the Norwegian expedition under Roald Amundsen, the explorer of the Magnetic North Pole and the conqueror of the Northwest Passage.

Many people seem to look upon the purpose of these two expeditions as being merely a race for the South Pole, and are anxious to know who will have the chances of getting there first. I am not able to look at it in that way, as I cannot understand that it matters much who gets there first, or whether they reach their goal some days sooner or later; the important thing is that regions of the earth still unknown will be explored. I think that never before were two so well-equipped expeditions, led by such capable explorers, in the field simultaneously, and we may certainly expect that both will achieve great things.

If we compare their chances of reaching the South Pole, I think that both expeditions have their special advantages. Captain Scott has one great advantage in his knowledge of the region, as during his previous very important expedition, which first revealed the interior of the Antarctic to us, he traversed a great part of the same distance which he now has to cover on his way to the Pole. And, moreover, he is going to follow the same route which was taken by Shackleton. He thus knows beforehand the ice, its condition, and what difficulties are to be expected. He has, moreover, the advantage that he is travelling southward parallel with a mountain range which will provide him with landmarks. It is thus easy for him to lay out depots without running the risk of not being able to find them when they are wanted. Finally, Scott may also, perhaps, have some advantage, as compared with Amundsen, in having more men, who may help him in establishing the depots, and may also support him during the first part of his southward journey and meet him when he returns.

It may also be considered by some an advantage on Scott's side that he has brought a motor-car, specially constructed for traversing snow-fields. I am not certain, however, that this will prove of very great value. After all, such a motor-car does not perform any kind of work that is not performed by the draught animals. Scott's car travels slower than the dogs, and, as far as I can make out, it cannot pull its own fuel for any distance which is comparable with the long distances the dogs can pull their own food. The motor-car is very heavy and complicated and it may cause great difficulties where obstacles of any kind are met with. As long as the motor-car has not been better developed for the purpose, I consider it, therefore, to be very doubtful whether it may not give more trouble than an additional number of draught animals performing the same work. Then it has also to be considered that when the animals have got no more food they can be eaten by the men, and also by each other, in the case of dogs, whilst the motor-car is of no more use when its fuel is at an end.

On the other hand, Captain Amundsen has undoubtedly his great advantages. By venturing to establish his winter quarters on the ice-barrier itself, he was able to obtain a starting-point nearly one degree farther south than Scott's station. His route toward the interior of the Antarctic region and to the South Pole is consequently about sixty geographical miles shorter each way; that makes a reduction of about a hundred and twenty miles on the whole journey.

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Amundsen has more than a hundred good Eskimo dogs, which, according to my opinion, have great advantages as compared with ponies in that region. They stand the climate much better, are able to carry their own food for a longer distance, and besides can eat each other, so that the distance the last sledge dogs can cover may be very much longer than that which any pony can travel in the same circumstances. It may be said in favor of the ponies that not such a great number of them is required as of the dogs, and that, consequently, fewer men can look after them. This may be true to some extent, at least under favorable conditions. But if exposed to trying climatic conditions the ponies may perhaps, after all, require more attention than the dogs, which, as a rule, are perfectly capable of taking care of themselves in the snow during the nights. It has also to be considered that it is, as a rule, a much easier task to travel with dogs and sledges across the smooth surface of the Antarctic ice-fields than to traverse the rough, broken pack-ice of the North Polar Basin, where the dogs continually run the sledges against obstacles in the way, and stop till you come and help them by lifting the sledges across. In the Antarctic the dogs may go on for hours without stopping, and one dog team will follow the other without any one to look after them. Thus rapid progress may be made fairly easily over the greater part of the distance, where there is not a rough glacier-surface with crevices. Besides, Amundsen and some of his men have had much experience in dog driving during his previous expedition to the Magnetic North Pole, when they also got many valuable lessons in this respect from the Eskimos; and Captain Hjalmar Johansen, who is with him, naturally got a great deal of experience during the *Fram* expedition and during our sledge-journey to Franz-Josef Land in 1895–6; there is also Mr. Hassel with him, an experienced dog driver from Sverdrup's expedition, 1898–1902. With his dogs Amundsen is also less dependent on the weather and climatic conditions than Scott with his ponies; he is thus able to start earlier in the Antarctic spring, when the temperatures are still very low, and will thus have a longer travelling season before him.

A great advantage on Amundsen's side is naturally that he and his men are well trained in the use of ski from their childhood; this will make it easier for them to make rapid progress across the extensive snow-fields than for men who are beginners in the use of ski, and will hardly know how to use them with advantage, or who may even have to walk along on their feet without the ski or any kind of snow-shoes.

From a scientific point of view, Amundsen's expedition has the great advantage that from the very start on their sledge-journey southward they will cover an entirely unknown field and cannot, therefore, avoid making very important discoveries, whilst the greater part of the region Scott has to traverse on his route to the South Pole has already been explored by himself and by Shackleton.

From a practical point of view, however, this is not in Amundsen's favor. Not knowing the region before him, he does not know the difficulties he may have to cope with in its interior. Probably he will find an extensive flat glacier-surface similar to the surface of the Greenland inland ice. But if he finds no mountains in the interior forming good landmarks, it may be very difficult to lay out depots along his route in such a manner that he may be perfectly certain of finding them again in such a flat snow-desert, where the snowdrifts may easily wipe out the traces of their sledge-tracks and footprints, and may even more or less bury the depots. Amundsen will, however, take special precautions in this respect by placing the depots in a straight line with good conspicuous marks. It is to be hoped that he will manage it without running the risk of not finding his depots on his homeward journey, which would naturally be fatal.

Everything considered, I think there is good reason to believe that both expeditions will reach the South Pole.

Many people seem to take it for granted that Amundsen will make for the Beardmore Glacier along which Shackleton ascended to the high glacier plateau near the South Pole. I do not feel perfectly certain of this. It will, of course, greatly depend on the surface and the conditions Amundsen will find in the interior. But his shortest route to the Pole goes east of the Beardmore Glacier, and it may be that he will follow that direction hoping to find favorable conditions for an ascent there.

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Anyhow, his route will be entirely different from Scott's, at least during the greater part of the journey; and thus important discoveries may be expected from both of them. There is great reason to be glad that those expeditions are undertaken at the same time, as the value of the observations of the one will be greaty increased by the simultaneous observations of the other; and it is only to be regretted that the German and Japanese expeditions which are now on their way south, as well as the great Australian expedition, could not have started in the same year. For the more simultaneous observations we can obtain from these still unknown or little known regions, the better. The physical conditions there are so entirely different from those of all known regions of the earth.

We will look forward to hearing what wonderful news the spring will bring us from the south.

Whatever that news may be, the task of polar explorers will be far from ended. It will only have entered on a new stage. I shall be glad to hear that the South Pole has been reached, whoever gets there. The farthest south and the farthest north points on the earth's surface will then both have been attained. There will be no more temptation to make other objects subservient to record-breaking. I do not disparage the sentiment which has led men to try to reach the Poles. It is a natural sentiment. It is inevitable that it should have played a large part in polar exploration. But now the time has come to give first place to the needs of science. Much remains to be discovered geographically in the polar regions, especially in the south; and geographical discovery—the actual unveiling of the geographical conditions as opposed to more or less ingenious speculation—must be the basis of all sound knowledge of the polar regions as of every other part of the world. It is not the completed structure. It is the foundation on which to erect careful investigations into phenomena that play an important part in determining the life of the outside world. Problems in meteorology, in terrestrial magnetism, in the flow of ocean currents, in the physical history of the earth, problems of practical moment as well as of scientific interest, depend for their solution on a fuller and more accurate knowledge of the conditions which are still the secret of polar lands and seas. No—the conquest of the Poles does not mark the end of polar exploration; we are only on the fringe of the work which has to be accomplished.

In looking to the future, we find a valuable subject for consideration in the equipment of polar expeditions and the possibilities of improving on past experience. If it be true of warfare that the battle is half won before it begins, it is no less true of polar expeditions that their success is determined very largely by the preparations made before they start. The preparations are dependent upon the commodities and contrivances available, but also, and chiefly, on the man. So it always was and still is. If we go back to early mediæval times, or even to antiquity, we find very much the same difficulties and the same dangers met with in the travels toward the north as we find quite lately, and it is remarkable how very little things have changed and how the chief features in the methods and equipment of northern journeys have been very much the same at all ages until quite recently. It is also wonderful how the men themselves seem to have been made of very much the same stuff.

I may mention, as an example, the discovery and exploration of Greenland, by Eric the Red, the description of which was put into writing in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and which probably took place at the end of the tenth century. We see how Eric equipped his ship in Iceland and made ready for the voyage, after having been declared an outlaw for three years on account of quarrels and slaughter. He said that he would go out to seek the land toward the west, of which there had been rumors in Iceland. He came to the east coast of Greenland, saw its great glaciers, sailed along the coast round Cape Farewell, discovered the south coast, spent the first winter there, explored the west coast during the two following years, went into the fjords, and finally returned to Iceland after three years' absence.

Concise as it is, this wonderful story seems to me to show many striking similarities to the narratives of modern voyages of exploration, and I feel tempted sometimes to doubt whether the world is actually developing as much as we generally believe. This happened five hundred years before

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the rediscovery of America by Columbus and Cabot. I think that this Norse exploration of Greenland a thousand years ago equals any modern polar exploration both as regards importance and as regards the way in which it was carried out.

It is, however, indisputable that the exploration of the polar regions has made unusually rapid strides forward during the last few decades. The goals of explorers of centuries have been attained—the North-west Passage has been accomplished by one little ship, the North Pole has been reached, the Arctic coasts have been explored all round the North Polar Sea, so there is now hardly any outline of known land left undiscovered. In Antarctic regions, almost unknown until quite recently, energetic explorers have made wonderful journeys revealing to us the secrets of the interior parts of this region, and the South Pole itself, as we have seen, may even now be the newly won prize of one if not of two expeditions.

What is the cause of these great achievements of late years? Are they due to new inventions which have proved of great help? I do not think that this can be said to be the case to any great extent. The success of an expedition depends now, as it did before, chiefly on the man, but, at the same time, I think it must be admitted that the methods of equipping and leading polar expeditions have become more systematic than they used to be in earlier days. If I compare the contrivances and experiences which were at my disposal when I began exploring work with the equipment and methods of modern expeditions, I find undoubtedly some great differences.

When I made ready for the expedition across Greenland in 1888, and was trying to make use of the experiences of earlier explorers, it struck me how little the principles for fitting out Arctic expeditions had been systematically worked out in detail. I found, for instance, no discussion of what the rational allowance of food for each man of a sledge party ought to be, or how the food ought to be composed in order to give the most favorable nourishment of the body in those surroundings. I could learn of no experiments as to which kind of sledges was preferable, what kind of runners ought to be used, whether wood or metal, what shape they ought to be in order to run most easily across the snow and ice fields, what the preferable load on each sledge would be, etc., etc.

In all these matters great improvements have since been effected, and the advance of mechanical science has suggested other and novel aids to progress. The utility of the motor-car for the penetration of the polar regions I have already discussed in connection with the race for the South Pole. When it is better developed for the purpose, it may become useful. It still remains to mention the possibility of airships and aeroplanes being used for polar work. As is well known, both the balloon and the airship have been tried for the crossing of the North Polar regions, but, unfortunately, with very sad results. Andrée, with his two comrades who tried the balloon, never returned. The Wellman attempt with an airship could not, of course, be expected to be successful, as he had very little experience in travelling by this means before he started from Spitzbergen. I do not see why it should not be possible to use an airship with advantage in the polar regions when they have been sufficiently well developed so that it can be said with confidence that they are perfectly under the leader's control.

As is known, the Germans propose to make an expedition of this nature from Spitzbergen as soon as they think that their airship is sufficiently improved for the purpose, and I feel convinced that very important exploration work may be carried out in this way. There is, however, one disadvantage with an airship, namely, that it is very big and bulky and if exposed to unfavorable weather it is somewhat difficult to deal with. It has also another drawback—that the gas of the balloon will leak out and the ship cannot easily be kept floating for any length of time. In this respect the aeroplane may have advantages when it gets more developed than it is at present and when its carrying power is much increased. It will then be possible to stop where you like for some time, in order to make your observations, etc., and I believe that the aeroplane, of some kind or another, will prove of great value for the future exploration of inaccessible regions.

It has been suggested that the polar bear might possibly be turned to account as a draught animal for polar expeditions. Captain Amundsen at one time considered the

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advisability of trying to break in polar bears for the purpose, and mentioned it to the well-known Herr Hagenbeck, of Hamburg. Hagenbeck considered it very possible, and actually started to break in some bears, and, according to what I have heard, really to some extent succeeded. Anyhow, this experiment has not been made in the polar regions, but if it really were possible to train the polar bear for the purpose, he would naturally be an ideal draught animal for these regions: his strength and endurance are wonderful; like the dog, he can live on concentrated food; and, better than the dog, he has remarkable reserve powers, enabling him to live for a long time without any food. I am, however, afraid that the polar bear would be a somewhat risky and troublesome draught animal to use, as he might not always be very easy to manage.

For travelling across the ice-covered North Polar Sea it may be of importance to carry boats. In 1827 Parry tried to reach the North Pole by dragging boats across the drifting ice, but with little success; the boats were much too heavy. During the British expedition in 1875–6, when Albert Markham and his brave men travelled northward from Grinnell Land, they also pulled a much too heavy boat across the uneven ice. I myself have tried the pulling of heavy boats across the drifting ice in order to reach the east coast of Greenland in 1888, and many other expeditions have had similar experiences. In this respect I believe that Johansen's and my sledge-journey from the *Fram* to Franz-Josef Land in 1895–6 marks an improvement, as we carried light canvas boats, or kayaks, one for each man, weighing little more than thirty-five pounds, and capable of holding an equipment for several months, besides carrying us and our sledges and dogs across the water-lanes in the ice. But here again the improvement was not due to any new invention; it was simply based upon the very old experiences of the Eskimos, their hide canoes, the kayaks, being used as models. They had, however, to be given a special shape and construction for the purpose. By carrying such boats a sledge expedition is made independent of open water which may be met with in the drifting ice. In fact, open water may be an advantage, as it should there be possible to advance more easily and more rapidly than across the surface of the ice.

A method for the exploration of the polar regions which has been tried several times, sometimes involuntarily, sometimes voluntarily, is the drifting in a ship with the ice. This method was especially used with success during the *Fram* expedition of 1893–6 across the North Polar Basin. The *Fram* was specially designed and built for the purpose, on lines suited to stand the ice-pressures, so that she would be lifted by the squeezing ice and not crushed by it. I think this method may be considered a very good one, especially whenever thorough scientific investigations are required, because on board the drifting ship all kinds of scientific observations and researches, even of the most delicate and difficult kind, may be carried on. A specially constructed and very strong ship is, however, required, and also much patience, as the drifting takes a very long time. Captain Roald Amundsen, after having returned from the South Pole, and after having made the necessary supplementary equipment, which may take a year, intends to continue on his way with the *Fram* to Bering Strait, go into the ice in that region somewhere north or northwest of Alaska, and then drift with the ice straight across the North Polar Basin to the sea between Greenland and Spitzbergen. This drift may take five years at least, probably more. It will, however, give a splendid opportunity of exploring the still unknown regions, and promises to bring results of very great importance.

The gallant Russian Admiral Makaroff hoped to be able to reach the North Pole and to navigate the still unknown parts of the North Polar Basin by means of a very strong ice-breaker sufficiently powerful to force its way through the heavy polar ice. Supported by the Russian Government, he had the *Yermak* built by Armstrong in Newcastle. This ship, built of steel, was unusually strong and the engines could develop ten thousand horse-power, which seems a great deal, considering that the engine of the *Fram*, for example, only developed about two hundred and twenty indicated horse-power. The *Yermak* was certainly a very good ice-breaker and really did remarkable things in the Arctic Sea in the summers of 1899 and 1901; but the heavy polar ice proved too much even for

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her, and she had to return after having begun to leak in consequence of the plates giving way in the bow.

Several schemes based upon the use of submarines for the exploration of the sea surrounding the North Pole have been propounded, but none of them has ever got much beyond the paper stage. The idea would naturally be that the submarines could dive under the ice, thus saving all the trouble connected with breaking your way through it or with traversing its rough surface. In the water-lanes between the floes of the drifting ice, covering the extensive area of sea, the submarine could come to the surface. Judging from my experience, I think it would always be possible, especially in the summer, to find, even in the interior of the North Polar Basin, water-lanes big enough for a submarine to rise to the surface; but the chief difficulty would probably be the great depths to which some parts of the polar ice descends, especially under the ridges and hummocks piled up by the pressures. The "foot" of these ice masses quite commonly goes down to one hundred and fifty feet, or even much more, below sea surface. In order to be certain of avoiding very unpleasant collisions with these deep ice blocks, it would consequently be necessary for a submarine to keep at depths of two hundred feet or more while moving along. Apart from the difficulty of constructing submarines sufficiently strong to stand pressures at such depths, it seems to me very doubtful whether it would be possible to see the difference between the ice and the water-lanes at two hundred feet below the surface. Although it is not possible to say how much submarine navigation may still be developed, I do not consider it probable that it will ever prove of much advantage to polar exploration.

We thus see that after all modern inventions have not yet been of very much importance for polar exploration, especially not for sledge work, and it is a remarkable fact that Peary's great achievements were chiefly attained by employing Eskimos, with Eskimo methods, Eskimo dogs, and Eskimo sledges. These are the methods of transit which were used by these earliest of polar travellers, thousands of years ago.

It is still, as it always was, chiefly the man on which the results of an expedition depend!

London, *26th November*, 1911.

WITCHING HILL STORIES

BY E. W. HORNUNG

Illustrations by F. C. Yohn

II.—THE HOUSE WITH RED BLINDS

UVO DELAVOYE had developed a theory to match his name for the Estate. The baleful spirit of the notorious Lord Mulcaster still brooded over Witching Hill, and the innocent occupiers of the Queen Anne houses were one and all liable to the malign influence. Such was the modest proposition, put as fairly as can be expected of one who resisted it from the first; for both by temperament and training I was perhaps unusually proof against this kind of thing. But then I always held that Delavoye himself did not begin by believing in his own idea, that he never thought of it before our subterranean adventure, and would have forgotten all about it but for the house with red blinds.

That vermilion house with the brave blinds of quite another red! I can still see them bleaching in the glare of those few August days.

It was so hot that the prematurely bronze leaves of the horse-chestnuts, behind the odd numbers in Mulcaster Park, were as crisp as tinfoil, while a tawny stubble defied the garden rollers of those tenants who had not been driven to the real country or the sea-side. Half our inhabited houses were

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either locked up empty, or in the hands of servants who spent their time gossiping at the gate. And I personally was not surprised when the red blinds stayed down in their turn.

The Abercromby Royles were a young couple who might be expected to mobilize at short notice, in spite of the wife's poor health, for they had no other ties. The mere fact of their departure on Bank Holiday, when the rest of the Estate were on the river, meant no more to me than a sudden whim on the lady's part; but then I never liked the looks of her, or her very yellow hair, least of all in a bath chair drawn by her indulgent husband after business hours. Mr. Royle was a little solicitor, who himself flouted tradition with a flower in his coat and a straw hat worn slightly on one side; but with him I had made friends over an escape of gas, which he treated as a joke rather than a grievance. He seemed to me just the sort of man to humor his sort of wife, even to the extent of packing off the servants on board wages, as they were said to have done before leaving themselves. Certainly I never thought of a sinister explanation until Uvo Delavoye put one into my head, and then I had no patience with him.

"It's this heat," I declared; "it's hot enough to uproot anybody."

"I wonder," said he, "how many other places they've found too hot for them!"

"But why should you wonder any such rot, when you say yourself that you've never even nodded to Abercromby Royle?"

"Because I've had my eye on him all the same, Gillon, as obvious material for the evil genius of the place."

"I see! I forgot you were spoiling for a second case."

"Case or no case," replied Uvo, "households don't usually disperse at a moment's notice, and their cook told our butcher that they never heard a thing until this morning. I have it from our own old treasure, if you want to know, so you can take it or leave it at that for what it's worth. But if I had your job, Gilly, and my boss was away, I don't know that I should feel altogether happy about my Michaelmas rent."

Nor was I quite so happy as I had been. I was spending the evening at my friend's, but I cut it rather shorter than I had intended; and on my way to the unlet house in which I lodged, I could not help stopping outside the one with the drawn red blinds. They looked natural enough at this time of night; but all the windows were shut as well; there was no sign of life about the house. And then, as I went my way, I caught a sound which I had just heard as I approached, but not while standing outside the gate. It was the sound of furtive hammering—a few taps and then a pause—but I retraced my steps too quietly to prolong the pause a second time. It was some devil's tattoo on the very door of the empty house, and as I reached up my hand to reply with the knocker, the door flew open and the devil was Abercromby Royle himself.

He looked one, too, by the light of the lamp opposite, but only for a moment. What impressed me most about our interview, even at the time, was the clemency of my reception by an obviously startled man. He interrupted my apologies to commend my zeal; as for explanations, it was for him to explain to me, if I would be good enough to step inside. I did so with a strange sense of impersonal fear or foreboding, due partly to the stuffy darkness of the hall, partly to a quiver of the kindly hand upon my shoulder. The dining-room, however, was all lit up, and like an oven. Whiskey was on the sideboard, and I had to join Mr. Royle in the glass that loosened his tongue.

It was quite true about the servants; they had gone first, and he was the last to leave the ship. The metaphor did not strike me as unfortunate until it was passed off with a hollow laugh. Mr. Royle no longer disguised his nervous worry; he seemed particularly troubled about his wife, who appeared to have followed the servants into the country, and whom he could not possibly join. He mentioned that he had taken her up to town and seen her off; then, that he was going up again himself by the last train that night; finally—after a pause and between ourselves—that he was sailing immediately for America. When I heard this I thought of Delavoye; but Royle seemed so glad when he had told me, and soon in such a stew about his train, that I felt certain there could be nothing really wrong. It was a sudden call, and a great upset to him; he made no secret of either fact or any of his plans. He had left his baggage that morning at the club where he was going to sleep. He even told me what had brought him

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back, and that led to an equally voluntary explanation of the hammering I had heard in the road.

"Would you believe it? I'd forgotten all about our letters!" exclaimed Abercromby Royle as we were about to leave the house together. "Having the rest of the day on my hands, I thought I might as well come back myself to give the necessary instructions. But it's no use simply filling up the usual form; half your correspondence still finds its way into your empty house; so I was just tacking this lid of an old cigar box across the slot. I'll finish it, if you don't mind, and then we can go so far together."

But we went together all the way, and I saw him off in a train laden with Bank Holiday water-folk. I thought he scanned them somewhat closely on the platform, and that some of my remarks fell on deaf ears. Among other things, I said I would gladly have kept the empty house aired, had he cared to trust me with his key. It was an office that I had undertaken for more than one of our absentee tenants. But the lawyer's only answer was a grip of the hand as the train began to move. And it seemed to me a haunted face that dissolved into the night, despite the drooping flower in the flannel coat and the hat worn a little on one side.

It would be difficult to define the impression left upon my mind by the whole of this equivocal episode; enough that, for more than one obvious reason, I said not a word about it to Uvo Delavoye. Once or twice I was tempted by his own remarks about Abercromby Royle, but on each occasion I set my teeth and defended the absent man as though we were both equally in the dark. It seemed a duty, after blundering into his affairs as I had done. But that very week brought forth developments which made a necessary end of all such scruples.

I was interviewing one of our foremen in a house that had to be ready by half-quarter-day, when Delavoye came in with a gleaming eye to tell me I was wanted.

"It's about our friend Royle," he added, trying not to crow. "I was perfectly right. They're on his tracks already!"

"Who are?" I demanded, when we were out of earshot of the men.

"Well, only one fellow so far, but he's breathing blood-hounds and Scotland Yard! It's Coysh, the trick-bicycle inventor; you must know the lunatic by name; but let me tell you that he sounds unpleasantly sane about your limb of the law. A worse case——"

"Where is he?" I interrupted hotly. "And what the devil does he want with me?"

"Thinks you can help him put salt on the bird that's flown, as sort of clerk to the whole aviary! I found him pounding at your office door. He's been down to Royle's and found it all shut up, of course—like his office in town, he says! Put that in your pipe and smoke it, Gilly! It's a clear case, I'm afraid, but you'd better have it from the fountain-head. I said I thought I could unearth you, and he's waiting outside for you now."

I looked through a window with a scroll of whitewash on the pane. In the road a thick-set man was fanning his big head with a wide soft hat, which I could not but notice that he wore with a morning coat and brown boots. The now eminent engineer is not much more conventional than the hot-headed patentee who in those days had still to find himself, and had lately been looking in the wrong place with a howling mob at his heels. But even then the quality of the man outshone the eccentricities of the super-crank. And I had a taste of it that August morning; a foretaste, when I looked into the road and saw worry and distress where I expected only righteous indignation.

I went down and asked him in, and his face lit up like a stormy sunbeam. But the most level-headed man in England could not have come to the point in fewer words or a more temperate tone.

"I'm glad your friend has told you what I've come about. I'm a plain speaker, Mr. Gillon, and I shall be plainer with you than I've been with him, because he tells me you know Abercromby Royle. In that case you won't start a scandal—because to know the fellow is to like him—and I only hope it may prove in your power to prevent one."

"I'll do anything I can, Mr. Coysh," I went so far as to say. But I was already taken by surprise. And so, I could see, was Uvo Delavoye.

"I'll hold you to that," said Coysh frankly. "When did you see him last, Mr. Gillon?"

"Do you mean Mr. Royle?" I stammered, turning away from Delavoye. If only he had not been there!

"Of course I do; and let me tell you, Mr. Gillon, this is a serious matter for the man

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you know. You won't improve his chances by keeping anything back. When did you see him last?"

"Monday night," I mumbled.

But Delavoye heard.

"Monday *night?*" he interjected densely. "Why, it was on Monday he went away!"

"Exactly—by the last train."

"But we heard they'd gone hours before!"

"We heard wrong, so far as Royle was concerned. I came across him after I left you, and I saw him off myself."

Coysh had a sharp eye on both of us, and Delavoye's astonishment was not lost upon him. But it was at me that he looked last and longest.

"And you keep this to yourself from Monday night till now?"

"What's about it?" I demanded, falling into my own vernacular in my embarrassment.

"It only looks rather as though you were behind the scenes," replied Coysh simply. And his honesty called to mine.

"I was just tacking this lid of an old cigar box across the slot."—Page 312.

"Well, so I was, to a certain extent," I cried; "but I got there by accident, I blundered in where I wasn't wanted, and yet the fellow treated me like a gentleman! That's why I never gave it away. But," I added, with more guile, "there was really nothing to give away." And with that I improvised a garbled version of my last little visit to the house with red blinds, which I did not say I had discovered in utter darkness, any more than I described the sound which had attracted my attention, or the state of the householder's nerves.

"Very good," said Coysh, making notes on an envelope. "And then you saw him off by the last train: did he say where he was going at that time of night?"

"To sleep at some club, I understood."

"And next morning?"

But I was sorry I had gone so far.

"Mr. Coysh," I said, "I'm here to let the houses on this Estate, and to look after odd jobs for the people who take them. It's not my business to keep an eye on the tenants themselves, still less to report their movements, and I must respectfully decline to say another word about Mr. Abercromby Royle."

The engineer put away his envelope with a shrug.

"Oh, very well; then you force me to go into details which I on my side would vastly prefer to keep to myself; but if you are sincere you will treat them as even more confidential than your own relations with Mr. Royle. You say you are hardly friends. I shall believe it if you stick to your present attitude when you've heard my story. Royle and I, however, have been only too friendly in the past, and I should not forget it even now, if I could find him."

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He made a meaning pause, of which I did not avail myself, though Delavoye encouraged me with an eager eye.

"He was not only my solicitor," continued Coysh; "he has acted as my agent in a good many matters which neither lawyers nor patent agents will generally undertake. You've heard of my Mainspring bicycle, of course? It was in his hands, and would have paid him well when it comes off, which is only a question of time." His fine face lit with irrelevant enthusiasm and glowed upon us each in turn. "When you think that by the very act of pedalling on the level we might be winding up—but there! It's going to revolutionize the most popular pastime of the day, and make my fortune incidentally; but meanwhile I've one or two pot-boilers that bring me in a living wage in royalties. One's an appliance they use in every gold-mine in South Africa. It was taken up by the biggest people in Johannesburg, and of course I've done very well out of it, this last year or two; but ever since Christmas my little bit has has been getting more and more overdue. Royle had the whole thing in hand. I spoke to him about it more than once. At last I told him that if he couldn't cope with our paymasters out there, I'd have a go at them myself; but what I really feared was that he was keeping the remittances back, never for a moment that he was tampering with each one as it came. That, however, is what has been going on all this year. I have the certified accounts to prove it, and Royle must have bolted just when he knew the mail would reach me where I've been abroad. I don't wonder, either; he's been faking every statement for the last six months!"

"But not before?" cried Delavoye, as though it mattered.

Coysh turned to him with puzzled eyes.

"No; that's the funny part of it," said he. "You'd think a man who went so wrong—hundreds, in these few months—could never have been quite straight. But not a bit of it. I've got the accounts; they were as right as rain till this last spring."

"I knew it!" exclaimed Delavoye in wild excitement.

"May I ask what you knew?"

Coysh was staring, as well he might.

"Only—that—the whole mischief must have happened since these people came here to live, Mr. Coysh?"

"Do you suggest that they've been living beyond their means?"

"I shouldn't be surprised," said Delavoye, as readily as though nothing else had been in his mind.

"Well, and I should say you were right," rejoined the engineer, "if it wasn't for the funniest part of all. When a straight man goes off the rails, there's generally some tremendous cause; but one of the surprises of this case, as my banker has managed to ascertain, is that Abercromby Royle is in a position to repay every penny. He has more than enough to do it, lying idle in his bank; so there was no apparent motive for the crime, and I for my part am prepared to treat it as a sudden aberration."

"Exactly!" cried Delavoye, as though he were the missing man's oldest friend and more eager than either of us to find excuses for him.

"Otherwise," continued Coysh, "I wouldn't have taken you gentlemen into my confidence. But the plain fact is that I'm prepared to condone the felony at my own risk in return for immediate and complete restitution." He turned his attention entirely to me. "Now, Royle can't make good unless you help him by helping me to find him. I won't be hard on him if you do, I promise you! Not a dozen men in England shall ever know. But if I have to hunt for him it'll be with detectives and a warrant, and the fat'll be in the fire for all the world to smell!"

What could I do but give in after that? I had not promised to keep any secrets, and it was clearly in the runaway's interests to disclose his destination on the conditions laid down. Of his victim's good faith I had not a moment's doubt; it was as patent as his magnanimous compassion for Abercromby Royle. He blamed himself for not looking after his own affairs. It was unfair to take a poor little pettifogging solicitor and turn him by degrees into one's trusted business man; it was trying him too high altogether. He spoke of the poor wretch as flying from a wrath that existed chiefly in his own imagination, and even for that he blamed himself. It appeared that Coysh had vowed to Royle that he would have no mercy on anybody who was swindling him, no matter who it might be. He had meant it as a veiled warning, but Royle might have known his bark was worse

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"In that case you won't start a scandal!"—Page 312.

than his bite, and made a clean breast of the whole thing there and then. If only he had! And yet I believe we all three thought the better of him because he had not.

But it was not too late, thanks to me! I could not reveal the boat or line by which Royle was travelling, because it had never occurred to me to inquire, but Coysh seemed confident of finding out. His confidence was of the childlike type which is the foible of some strong men. He knew exactly what he was going to do, and it sounded the simplest thing in the world. Royle would be met on the other side by a cable which would bring him to his senses —and by one of Pinkerton's young men who would shadow him until it did. Either he would cable back the uttermost farthing through his bank, or that young man would tap him on the shoulder without more ado. It was delightful to watch a powerful mind clearing wire entanglements of detail in its

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leap to a picturesque conclusion; and we had further displays for our benefit; for there was no up-train for an hour and more, and that set the inventor off upon his wonderful bicycle, which was to accumulate hill power by getting wound up automatically on the level. Nothing is so foolish as the folly of genius, and I shall never forget that great man's obstinate defence of his one supreme fiasco, or the diagram that he drew on an unpapered wall while Uvo Delavoye and I attended with insincere solemnity.

But Uvo was no better when we were at last alone. And his craze seemed to me the crazier of the two.

"It's as plain as a pikestaff, my good Gillon! This fellow Royle comes here an honest man, and instantly starts on a career of fraud—for no earthly reason whatsoever!"

"So you want to find him an unearthly one?"

"I don't; it's there—and a worse case than the last. Old Sir Christopher was the only sober man at his own orgy, but my satanic ancestor seems to have made a mighty clean job of this poor brute!"

"I'm not so sure," said I gloomily. "I'm only sure of one thing—that the dead can't lead the living astray—and you'll never convince me that they can!"

It was no use arguing, for we were oil and vinegar on this matter, and were beginning to recognize the fact. But I was grateful to Uvo Delavoye for his attitude on another point. I tried to explain why I had never told him about my last meeting with Abercromby Royle. It was not necessary; there he understood me in a moment; and so it was in almost everything except this one perverse obsession, due in my opinion to a morbid imagination, which in its turn I attributed to the wretched muddle that the Egyptian climate had made of poor Uvo's inner man. While not actually an invalid, there was little hope of his being fit for work of any sort for a year or more; and I remember feeling glad when he told me he had obtained a reader's ticket for the British Museum, but very sorry when I found that his principal object was to pursue his Witching Hill will-o'-the-wisp to an extent impossible in the local library. Indeed, it was no weather for close confinement on even the healthiest intellectual quest. Yet it was on his way home from the museum that Uvo had picked up Coysh outside my office, and that was where he was when Coysh came down again before the week was out.

This time I was in, and sweltering over the schedule of finishings for the house in which he had found me before, when my glass door darkened and the whole office shook beneath his ominous tread. With his back to the light, the little round man looked perfectly black with rage; and if he did not actually shake his fist in my face, that is the impression that I still retain of his outward attitude.

His words came in a bitter torrent, but their meaning might have been stated in one breath. Royle had not gone to America at all. Neither in his own name nor any other had he booked his passage at the London office of the Tuesday, or either of the Wednesday steamers, nor as yet in any of those sailing on the following Saturday. So Coysh declared, with characteristic conviction, as proof positive that a given being could not possibly have sailed for the United States under any conceivable disguise or alias. He had himself made a round of the said London offices, armed with photographs of Abercromby Royle. That settled the matter. It also branded me in my visitor's blazing eyes as accessory before or after the flight, and the deliberate author of a false scent which had wasted a couple of invaluable days.

It was no use trying to defend myself, and Coysh told me it was none. He had no time to listen to a "jackanapes in office," as he called me to my face. I could not help laughing in his. All he wanted and intended to discover was the whereabouts of Mrs. Royle—the last thing I knew, or had thought about before that moment—but in my indignation I referred him to the post-office. By way of acknowledgment he nearly shivered my glass door behind him.

I mopped my face and awaited Delavoye with little patience, which ran out altogether when he entered with a radiant face, particularly full of his own egregious researches in Bloomsbury.

"I can't do with that rot to-night!" I cried. "Here's this fat little fool going to get on the tracks of Mrs. Royle, and all through me! The woman's an invalid; this may finish her off. If it were the man himself I wouldn't mind. Where the devil do you suppose he is?"

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Drawn by F. C. Yohn.

I drove Delavoye before me through the window he had just opened.—Page 321.

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"I'll tell you later," said Uvo Delavoye, without moving a muscle of his mobile face.

"You'll tell me——see here, Delavoye!" I spluttered. "This is a serious matter to me; if you're going to rot about it I'd rather you cleared out!"

"But I'm not rotting, Gilly," said he in a different tone, yet with a superior twinkle that I never liked. "I never felt less like it in my life. I really have a pretty shrewd idea of my own, but you're such an unbelieving dog that you must give me time before I tell you what it is. I should like first to know rather more about these alleged peculations and this apparent flight, and whether Mrs. Royle's in it all. I'm rather interested in the lady. But if you care to come in for supper you shall hear my views."

Of course I cared; but across the solid mahogany of more spacious days, though we had it to ourselves, we both seemed disinclined to resume the topic. Delavoye had got up some choice remnant of his father's cellar, grotesquely out of keeping with our homely meal, but obviously in my honor, and it seemed a time to talk about matters in which we were agreed. I was afraid I knew the kind of idea he had described as "shrewd"; what I dreaded was some fresh application of his ingenious doctrine as to the local quick and dead, and a heated argument in our extravagant cups. And yet I did want to know what was in my companion's mind about the Royles; for my own was no longer free from presentiments for which there was some ground in the facts of the case. But I was not going to start the subject; and Delavoye steadily avoided it until we strolled out afterward (with humble pipes on top of that Madeira!). Then his arm slipped through mine, and it was with one accord that we drifted up the road toward the house with the drawn blinds.

All these days, on my constant perambulations, it had stared me in the face with its shut windows, its dirty step, its idle chimneys. Every morning those odious blinds had greeted one like red eyelids hiding dreadful eyes. And once I had remembered that the very letter-box was set like teeth against the outer world. But this summer evening, as the house came between us and a noble moon, all was so changed and chastened that I thought no evil until Uvo spoke.

"I can't help feeling that there's something wrong!" he exclaimed below his breath.

"If Coysh is not mistaken," I whispered back, "there's something very wrong indeed."

He looked at me as though I had missed the point, and I awaited an impatient intimation of the fact. But there had been something strange about Uvo Delavoye all the evening; he had singularly little to say for himself, and now he was saying it in so low a voice that I insensibly lowered mine, though we had the whole road practically to ourselves.

"You said you found old Royle quite alone the other night?"

"Absolutely—so *he* said."

"You've no reason to doubt it, have you?"

"No reason—none. Still, it did seem odd that he should hang on to the end—the master of the house—without a soul to do anything for him."

"I quite agree with you," said Delavoye emphatically. "It's very odd. It means something. I believe I know what, too!"

But he did not appear disposed to tell me, and I was not going to press him on the point. Nor did I share his confidence in his own powers of divination. What could he know of the case, that was unknown to me—unless he had some outside source of information all the time?

That, however, I did not believe; in any case he seemed bent upon acquiring more. He opened the gate, and was on the doorstep before I could say a word. I had to follow in order to remind my friend that his proceedings might be misunderstood if they were seen.

"Not a bit of it!" he had the nerve to say as he bent over the tarnished letter-box. "You're with me, Gillon, and isn't it your job to keep an eye on these houses?"

"Yes, but——"

"What's the matter with this letter-box? It won't open!"

"That's so that letters can't be shot into the empty hall. He nailed it up on purpose before he went. I found him at it."

"And didn't it strike you as an extraordinary thing to do?" Uvo was standing upright now. "Of course it did, or you'd have mentioned it to Coysh and me the other day."

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"The man you want has been here all the time."—Page 321.

It was no use denying the fact.

"What's happening to their letters?" he went on, as though I could know.

"I expect they're being redirected."

"To the wife?"

"I suppose so."

And my voice sank with my heart, and I felt ashamed, and repeated myself aggressively.

"Exactly!" He seemed to know. "The wife at some mysterious address in the country—poor soul!"

"Where are you going now?"

He had dived under the front windows, muttering as much to himself as to me. I caught him up at the high side gate into the garden.

"Lend me a hand," said Delavoye when he had tried the latch.

"You're not going over?"

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"That I am, and it'll be your duty to follow. Or I could let you through. Well—if you won't!"

And in the angle between party-fence and gate he was still struggling manfully when I went to his aid as a lesser evil; in a few seconds we were both in the back garden of the empty house, with the gate again bolted behind us.

"Now, if it were ours," resumed Delavoye when he had taken breath, "I should say the lavatory window was the vulnerable point. Lavatory window, please!"

"But, Delavoye, look here!"

"I'm looking," said he as we faced each other in the broad moonlight that flooded the already ragged lawn.

"If you think I'm going to let you break into this house, you're very much mistaken."

I had my back to the windows I meant to hold inviolate. No doubt the moon revealed some resolution in my face and bearing, for I meant what I said until Delavoye spoke again.

"Oh, very well!" said he. "If it's coming to brute force I have no more to say. The police will have to do it, that's all. It's their job when you come to think of it; but it'll be jolly difficult to get them to take it on, whereas you and I——"

And he turned away with a shrug to point his admirable aposiopesis.

"Man Uvo," I said, catching him by the arm, "what's this job you're jawing about?"

"You know well enough. You're in the whole mystery of these people far deeper than I am. I only want to find the solution."

"And you think you'll find it in their house?"

"I know I should," said Uvo with quiet confidence. "But I don't say it'll be a pleasant find. I shouldn't ask you to come in with me, but merely to accept some responsibility afterward—to-night if we're spotted. It will probably involve more kudos in the end. But I don't want to let you in for more than you can stand meanwhile, Gillon."

That was enough for me. I myself led the way back to the windows, angrily enough until he took my arm, and then suddenly more at one with him than I had ever been before. I had seen his set lips in the moonlight, and felt the uncontrollable tremor of the hand upon my sleeve.

It so happened that it was not necessary to break in after all. I had generally some keys about me and the variety of locks on our back doors was not inexhaustible. It was the scullery door in this case that a happy coincidence thus enabled me to open. But I was now more determined than Delavoye himself, and would have stuck at no burglarious excess to test his prescience, to say nothing of a secret foreboding which had gradually framed itself in my own mind.

To one who went from house to house on the Estate as I did, and knew by heart the five or six plans on which builder and architect had rung the changes, darkness should have been no hindrance to the unwarrantable exploration I was about to conduct. I knew the way through these kitchens, and found it here without a false or noisy step. But in the hall I had to contend with the furniture which makes one interior as different from another as the houses themselves may be alike. The Abercromby Royles had as much furniture as the Delavoyes, only of a different type. It was not massive and unsuitable, but only too dainty and multifarious, no doubt in accordance with the poor wife's taste. I retained an impression of artful simplicity—an enamelled drain-pipe for the umbrellas—painted tambourines, and things on milk-stools—which rather charmed me in those days. But I had certainly forgotten a tall flower stand outside the kitchen door, and over it went crashing as I set foot in the tessellated hall. I doubt if either of us drew breath for some seconds after the last bit of broken plant-pot lay still upon the tiles. Then I rubbed a match on my trousers, but it did not strike. Uvo had me by the hand before I could do it again.

"Do you want to blow up the house?" he croaked. "Can't you smell it for yourself?"

Then I realized that the breath which I had just drawn was acrid with escaped gas.

"It's that asbestos stove again!" I exclaimed, recalling my first visit to the house.

"Which asbestos stove?"

"It's in the dining-room. It was leaking as far back as June."

"Well, we'd better go in there first and open the window. Stop a bit!"

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The dining-room was just opposite the kitchen, and I was on the threshold when he pulled me back to tie my handkerchief across my nose and mouth. I did the same for Delavoye, and then we crept into the room where I had been induced to drink with Royle on the night he went away.

The full moon made smouldering panels of the French window leading into the garden, but little or no light filtered through the long red blind. Delavoye went round to it on tiptoe, and I still say it was a natural instinct that kept our voices down and our movements stealthy; that any other empty house, where we had no business at dead of night, would have had the same effect upon us. Delavoye speaks differently for himself, and I certainly heard him fumbling unduly for the blind cord while I went over to the gas-stove. At least I was going when I stumbled against a basket chair, which creaked without yielding to my weight, and creaked again as though some one had stirred in it. I recoiled, panic-stricken, and so stood until the blind flew up. Then the silence was sharply broken by a voice that I can still hear but hardly recognize as my own.

It was Abercromby Royle who was sitting in the moonlight over the escaping stove; and I shall not describe him; but a dead flower still drooped from the lapel of a flannel jacket which the dead man had horribly outgrown.

I drove Delavoye before me through the window he had just opened; it was he who insisted on returning, ostensibly to turn off the gas, and I could not let him go alone. But neither could I face the ghastly occupant of the basket chair, and it was Uvo Delavoye again who was busy disengaging something from the frozen fingers when a loud rat-tat resounded through the house.

It was grim to see how the corpse sat still and let us jump; but Uvo was himself before the knock was repeated.

"You go, Gillon!" he said. "It's only somebody who's heard or seen us. Don't you think we smelt the gas through the letter-box, and wasn't it your duty——"

The second knock cut him short, and I answered it without more ado. The night constable on the beat, who knew me well by sight, was standing on the doorstep like a man, his right hand on his hip till he had blinded me with his lantern. A grunt of relief assured me of his recognition, while his timely arrival was as promptly explained by an insensate volley in a more familiar voice.

"Don't raise the road, Mr. Coysh!" I implored. "The man you want has been here all the time, and dead for the last five days!"

That was a heavy night for me. If Coysh could have made it something worse, I think just at first he would; for he had been grossly deceived, and I had unwittingly promoted the deception. But his good sense and heart had brought him to reason before I accompanied the policeman to the station, leaving the other two on guard over a house as hermetically sealed as Delavoye and I had found it.

At the police station I was stiffly examined by the superintendent; but the explanations that I now felt justified in giving, at Delavoye's instigation, were received without demur and I was permitted to depart in outward peace. Inwardly I was not so comfortable, for Delavoye had not confined his hints to an excuse for entry, made the more convincing by the evil record of the asbestos stove. We had done some more whispering while the constable was locking up, and the impulsive Coysh had lent himself to our final counsels. The result was that I said nothing about my own farewell to Royle, though I dwelt upon my genuine belief that he had actually gone abroad. And I did say I was convinced that the whole affair had been an accident, due to the same loose gas-stove tap which had caused an escape six weeks before.

That was my only actual lie, and on later consideration I began to wonder whether even it was not the truth. This was in Delavoye's sanctum, on the first-floor-back at No. 7, and after midnight; for I had returned to find him in the clutches of excited neighbors, and had waited about till they all deserted him to witness the immediate removal of the remains.

"What is there, after all," I asked, "to show that it really was a suicide? He might have come back for something he'd forgotten, and kicked against the tap by accident, as somebody did in June. Why make a point of doing the deed at home?"

"Because he didn't want his wife to know."

"But she was bound to know!"

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"Sooner or later, of course; but the later the better from his point of view, and their own shut-up house was the one place where he might not have been found for weeks. And that would have made all the difference—in the circumstances."

"But what do you know about the circumstances, Uvo?" I could not help asking a bit grimly; for his air of omniscience always prepared me for some specious creation of his own fancy. But for once I was misled, and I knew it from his altered face before I heard his unnatural voice.

"What do I know?" repeated Uvo Delavoye. "Only that one of the neighbors has just had a wire from Mrs. Royle's people to say that she's got a son! That's all," he added, seizing a pipe; "but if you think a minute you'll see that it explains every other blessed thing."

And I saw that so it did, as far as the unfortunate Royle was concerned; and there was silence between us while I ran through my brief relations with the dead man and Delavoye filled his pipe.

"I never took to the fellow," he went on in a callous tone that almost imposed upon me. "I didn't like his eternal button-hole, or the hat on one side, or the awful shade of their beastly blinds, or the color of the good lady's hair for that matter! Just the wrong red and yellow, unless you happen to wear blue spectacles; and if you'd ever seen them saying good-bye of a morning you'd have wished you were stone-blind. But if ever I marry—which God forbid—may I play the game by my wife as he has done by his! Think of his feelings—with two such things hanging over him—those African accounts on the way as well! Is he to throw himself on his old friend's mercy? No; he's too much of a man, or perhaps too big a villain—but I know which I think now. What then? If there's a hue and cry the wife'll be the first to hear it; but if he lays a strong false scent, through an honest chap like you, it may just tide over the days that matter. So it has, in point of fact; but for me there'd have been days and days to spare. But imagine yourself creeping back into your empty hole to die like a rat, and still thinking of every little thing to prevent your being found!"

"And to keep it from looking like suicide when you were!" said I, with yet a lingering doubt in my mind.

"Well, then, I say you have the finest suicide ever!" declared Uvo Delavoye. "I only wish I knew when he began to think it all out. Was it before he called you in to see the tap that didn't turn off? Or was it the defective tap that suggested the means of death? In either case, when he nailed up his letter-box, it was not, of course, to keep the postman from the door, but to keep the smell of gas inside if he or anybody else did come. That, I think, is fairly plain."

"It's ingenious," I conceded, "whether the idea's your own or Royle's."

"It must have been his," said Delavoye with conviction. "You don't engineer an elaborate fake and get in one of your best bits by accident. No; there was only one mistake poor Royle made, and it *was* unpremeditated. It was rather touching, too. Do you remember my trying to get something from his fingers, just when the knock came?"

I took a breath through my teeth.

"I wish I didn't! What was it?"

"A locket with yellow hair in it. And he'd broken the glass, and his thumb was on the hair itself! I don't suppose," added Delavoye, "it would have meant to anybody else what it must to you and me, Gillon; but I'm not sorry I got it out of his clutches in time."

Yet now he could shudder in his turn.

"And to think," I said at last, recalling the secret and forgotten foreboding with which I myself had entered the house of death; "only to think that at the last I was more prepared for murder than suicide! I almost suspected the poor chap of having killed his wife, and shut her up there!"

"Did you?" said Delavoye, with an untimely touch of superiority. "That never occurred to me."

"But you must have thought something was up?"

"I didn't think. I knew."

"Not what had happened?"

"More or less."

"I wish you'd tell me how!"

Uvo smiled darkly as he shook his head.

"It's no use telling certain people certain things. You shall see for yourself with your own two eyes!" He got up and crossed the room. "You know what I'm up to at the British Museum; did I tell you

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they'd got a fine old last-century plan of the original Estate? Well, for days past I've had a man in Holborn trying to get me a copy for love or money. He's just succeeded. Here it is."

A massive hereditary desk, as early Victorian as all the Delavoye possessions, stood before the open window that looked out into the moonlight; on this desk was a reading gas-lamp, with a smelly rubber tube, of the same maligned period; and there and thus was the plan spread like a table-cloth, pinned down by ash tray, inkpot, and the lamp itself, and duly overhung by our two young heads. I carry it pretty clearly still in my mind's eye. The Estate alone, or rather the whole original property and nothing else, was outlined and filled in, and the rest left as white as age permitted. It was like a map of India upside down. The great house was curiously situated in the apex, but across the road a clump of shrubberies stood for Ceylon. Our present Estate was at the thick end, as Delavoye explained, and it was a thrilling moment when he laid his nail upon the Turkish Pavilion, actually so marked, and we looked out into our moonlit garden and beheld its indubitable site. The tunnel was not marked. But Delavoye ran his finger to the left, and stopped on an emblem illegibly inscribed in small faint ancient print.

"It's 'Steward's Lodge,'" said Delavoye as I peered in vain; "you shall have a magnifying glass, if you like, to show there's no deception. But the story I'm afraid you'll have to take on trust for the moment. If you want to see chapter and verse, apply for a reader's ticket and I'll show you both any day at the B. M. I only struck them myself this afternoon, in a hairy tome called 'The Mulcaster Peerage'—and a whole page of sub-titles. They're from one of the epistles of the dear old sinner himself, written as though other people's money had never melted in his noble fist. I won't spoil it by misquotation. But you'll find that there was once an unjust steward, who robbed the wicked lord of this very vineyard, and then locked himself into the lodge, and committed suicide rather than face the fearful music!"

I did not look at Delavoye; but I felt his face glowing like a live coal, close to mine.

"This road isn't marked," I said as though I had been simply buried in the plan.

"Naturally; it wasn't made. Would you like to see where it ran?"

"I shouldn't mind," I said with the same poor quality of indifference.

He took a bit of old picture-rod, which he kept for a ruler on his desk, and ran a pair of parallel lines in blue pencil from west to east. The top line came just under the factor's cottage.

"It's in this very road!" I exclaimed.

"Not only that," returned Delavoye, "but if you go by the scale, and pace the distance, you'll find that the Steward's Lodge was on the present site of the house with red blinds!"

And he turned away to fill another pipe, as though finely determined not to crow or glow in my face. But I did not feel myself an object for magnanimity.

"I thought it was only your ignoble kinsman, as you call him," I said, "who was to haunt and influence us all. If it's to be his man-servant, his maid-servant——"

"Stop!" cried Delavoye. "Stop in time, my dear man, before you come to one or other of us! Can you seriously think it a mere coincidence that a thing like this should happen on the very spot where the very same thing has happened before?"

"I don't see why not," said I stoutly.

"I had only the opposite idea to go upon, Gilly, and yet I found exactly what I expected to find. Was that a fluke?"

"Or a coincidence—call it what you like."

"Call it what *you* like," retorted Delavoye with great good-humor. "But if the same sort of thing happens again, will it still be a coincidence or a fluke?"

"In my view, always," I replied, hardening my heart for ever.

"That's all right, then!" he cried with his schoolboy laugh. "You pays your money and you takes your choice."

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THE CONVICTIONS OF A GRANDFATHER

BY ROBERT GRANT

V

TWO recent events, commonplace in themselves, yet typical, have served notice on me through the discussion to which they have given rise in my family circle that the progress of social reforms resembles the silent movement of the glaciers, and that we suddenly find ourselves condemning as monstrous results which we complacently accepted as inevitable less than a generation ago.

Every one who lives in my neighborhood knows Thomas McGillicuddy by sight, for thirty years the chore man of our block; a brisk little man with a clump of chin whiskers and a pronounced brogue. He moves more slowly than formerly, and but for the indulgence of the households for whom he works might fairly be regarded as superannuated. He has brought up a large family, six daughters and an only son, John, the apple of his eye, a strapping, able-bodied railroad employee, who has a wife and three small children.

Two months ago, just prior to Thanksgiving Day, this son lost his right leg by an accident due to the negligence of another subordinate, a fellow-servant, as the legal phrase goes. Cut off just above the knee. But for his strong constitution and temperate habits, according to the surgeon who performed the operation, he would never have pulled through. But he will get well, for which his family is becomingly thankful despite the plight in which they find themselves.

The question naturally suggests itself—what will become of them? How are they going to get along? Everybody has been very kind and sympathetic. The immediate needs of the wife and children were provided for by the purse which one of the charitably inclined young women in our block raised by personal solicitation while the accident was fresh in the public mind. They will not need to draw on their scanty savings for the moment. The victim, who is still at the hospital, puts a bold front on the situation and keeps up his courage by the perusal of communications from both owners and makers of wooden legs which reach him through the mail. All of these are to the effect that one hobbles through life surprisingly well after a little practice. Josephine has sent fruit and other delicacies to the sufferer and new toys to the children—which is but typical of the general sympathy among those who take a personal interest.

But we all know—and the victim best of all—that the hard time is coming later, when the philanthropic "tumult dies," the charitable "kings depart," and he is left minus a leg to confront a workaday, industrial world. Even the most philanthropic of us demand variety for our emotions and tend to lose sight of an irreparable catastrophe after we have done everything in our power to provide relief. It is inevitable that something else will happen presently to divert our warm commiseration into a fresh channel, and John McGillicuddy's accident will become an old story. Hence it behooves us to dwell on the inquiry how are they going to get along?—before our sensibilities have been rocked to sleep by the soothing refrain, "Every one has done more than the unfortunates had a right to expect, and now they must manage the best they can."

The driving exigencies of modern life take for granted the frequent lopping off of legs and arms. But it is scarcely necessary to demonstrate that ours is a highly merciful and considerate age. Even the joy rider is more than apt to turn back and convey to the hospital at break-neck speed the mangled form of whomever his car has crushed. When accidents occur, who is more prompt in providing immediate succor than the modern corporation, which

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used to be accused of lacking a soul? Far from being left to shift for himself, the injured employee without resources is tenderly lifted into an ambulance, tucked up in a snowy cot, and made nearly as good as new without charge by the wonderful resources of antiseptic surgery. So humane is the treatment accorded the patient that minor accidents become almost a privilege in that he was never so well taken care of in his life. Loss of pay for a limited period is often precluded, and almost any self-respecting workman may break a rib or two without much concern as to the consequences.

But this beneficent alliance between corporate charity and surgery must needs be conscious of limitations when in the presence of certain injuries. A leg is a leg; a right arm is a right arm. A glass eye is merely an æsthetic mockery. The man who is smashed all to pieces, coaxed back to life, and sent out maimed and halt may be temporarily grateful to his nurse and doctor and to the merciful corporation which footed the bills; but is scarcely to be blamed if, in the watches of the night, before he is pronounced cured, he keeps asking himself, "what is to become of us?" and lets his thoughts dwell on the lawyers' cards concealed under his pillow rather than on the communications which set forth the merits of artificial limbs.

About a week after the accident to John McGillicuddy, when indeed his recovery was still doubtful, my wife asked me to hint to his father, our chore man, that if there was need of a lawyer to safeguard the victim's rights, that rising young attorney, my grandson, Harold Bruce, was the logical candidate for the position.

I use the word "candidate" advisedly, for Josephine's plea was as follows: "Of course, I am wholly unfamiliar with legal affairs, but Harold tells me that a very large percentage of law business nowadays consists of personal injury suits and that it is the habit of the less scrupulous lawyers to employ, either openly or on the sly, 'runners,' as he calls them, who keep track of all accidents reported in the newspapers and lose no time in trying to obtain leave from the injured persons to represent them in court. Harold hasn't a doubt that John has been deluged with lawyers' cards since he entered the hospital, and John, may, of course, have engaged some one already. But probably not, for he is still very low. Harold's firm does not stoop to such methods, which, he informs me, tend to promote litigation and to secure a mean advantage over the rest of the profession. At the same time, if there is to be a suit, and some one's services are requisite—or even if poor John dies, it seems—Harold would like to obtain the employment for his firm. It would be a feather in his cap and the case would be splendidly handled, for it appears that his Mr. Fogarty is what Harold terms a spellbinder before a jury. So, other things being equal, I should suppose the McGillicuddies would be glad to give the dear boy the chance. It might be the making of him, he tells me."

Let me remark parenthetically at this point that my grandson, though admitted to the bar, is an assistant in the offices of Blackstone, Kent, Fogarty, and Einstein, one of our leading firms, which, as the names of the partners indicate, is equipped for every modern legal emergency.

"The point which I do not understand, dear," continued Josephine after the delivery of her message, "and which I meant to ascertain from Harold, but hadn't the heart to inquire, is why any lawyer's services are necessary. The accident was so dreadful and so completely due to the other man's carelessness that the railroad cannot fail to treat John handsomely."

"What do you mean by handsomely?" I inquired, and I suspect that my smile betrayed a suggestion of irony.

My wife looked momentarily disconcerted by this shifting to her shoulders of the burden of argument; but after a moment's reflection she succeeded by means of the following dispassionate statement in letting it slip gracefully to the ground for me to pick up.

"He is crippled for life and will never be able to work on the railroad again. His earning capacity is gone, or, at least, is so slight that his wife will be compelled to scrub floors or sew her eyes out and the children to labor at an early age in order to make two ends meet. As a consequence, the entire family will fall several pegs lower in the social scale, if not become a public charge—unless something suitable is done."

"One of the dire penalties of being a fellow-servant," I responded.

Josephine seemed for the moment nonplussed, then her eyes flashed. "I keep

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telling you, Fred, that it was the other man's fault entirely. John wasn't in the least to blame."

"Every one admits that. But he ought to have known better."

"Better than what?"

"Better than assume the risks of the employment."

"Assume the risks? I don't understand you."

"The risk of being hurt by some other subordinate's negligence."

"I don't believe John ever did."

"I am positive he did not," I answered.

"Then what *do* you mean, Fred?" My wife can look rather severe when she believes that she is being trifled with on what she deems a serious subject.

"The law insists he did."

"Our law? Insists when it knows he didn't? Then the law——"

"Quite so," I interrupted before she could frame animadversions which she might subsequently regret concerning the bulwark of our institutions. "Unfortunately, one cannot dispose of the law in so summary a fashion, Josephine." Then to complete her growing bewilderment I added, "Moreover it was John's duty to know that the other man was likely to be careless."

"How could he?" she cried triumphantly. "Thomas told me that John didn't know the other man, even by sight."

"That makes no difference. The law says he had a better opportunity than the railroad to keep an eye on him and realize that he might commit blunders. If you don't believe me, dear, consult your grandson fresh from his law studies."

Josephine gasped. "You mean that the railroad won't give him anything?"

"Pay his doctor's bills."

"And nothing else?"

"Not unless Harold's firm compels them to by convincing a judge and jury either that John wasn't a fellow-servant after all, or that even if he were, the railroad itself was negligent in some way and that John wasn't. To convince them—if he does convince them—will take three years at least, require elaborate preparation and an agonizing trial. Eye-witnesses of the catastrophe will be summoned by either side and badgered into admitting that what they stated five minutes before was the reverse of what they meant to say. Physicians will be put upon the rack and demonstrated to be ignoramuses by experts hired for the purpose. The judge will probably feel obliged to rule that John can't recover. If he is reversed on appeal the agony must be gone through again. Assuming that the case gets to a jury, the amount awarded will depend on the ability of Mr. Fogarty to awaken their sympathies, on whether they like the looks of John (who may be a Mason), on how near it is to the dinner-hour and on various other unscientific considerations. If they return a large verdict, the fees of the experts and witnesses must come out of it, a considerable slice for Mr. Fogarty, and something for Harold. You see, the whole affair is a sort of grand lottery, and the likelihood is that the strain on John and his wife of the delay and uncertainty will be such as to produce nervous prostration for one or both, which will eat up most of what is recovered."

I paused for breath, not because I had exhausted the possibilities of the subject. Whereupon Josephine seized the opportunity to exclaim with feeling:

"What a barbarous and unphilanthropic state of affairs!"

My previous comment that we suddenly condemn as monstrous results which we once accepted with complacency was due to this exclamation of my wife's. Josephine, as she has admitted, does not pretend to a knowledge of the law, but I am confident that had some one forty years ago (she is always young to me) poured in her sympathetic ear the details of poor John's calamity, her tender heart would have bled, but it would not have occurred to her that "something suitable" ought to be done for him by his employer. She would have deplored his loss of a leg, which deprived him of a livelihood, as one of those dire misfortunes for which Providence has made no provision, like falling off the roof of a house, for instance, while at work—lamentable and to be mitigated by charity, but not in the nature of an injustice which society was called on to redress.

We need to go back only another forty years to find no less a person than James Scarlett, Lord Abinger, solemnly announcing from the bench that it would never do to permit a butcher's assistant to recover damages from his master for injuries caused

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through the overloading by another servant of the market wagon on which they were both perched. The picture which he drew on that occasion of the domestic consequences which would flow from a contrary decision were so convincing that they have proved a stumbling-block in the pathway of humanitarian progress ever since.

"The master" (this is his lordship's language), "for example, would be liable to the servant for the negligence of the chambermaid, for putting him into a damp bed; for that of the upholsterer, for sending in a crazy bedstead, whereby he was made to fall down while asleep and injure himself; for the negligence of the cook in not properly cleaning the copper vessels used in the kitchen; of the butcher in supplying the family with meat of a quality injurious to the health; of the builder for a defect in the foundation of the house, whereby it fell and injured both the master and the servant by the ruins."

Sagacious words these from the standpoint of the period. So sagacious, indeed, that they served to solve the acknowledged doubts of one of our own wisest tribunals when five years later, in 1842, the liability of a railroad for injuries to an engineer, due to the carelessness of a switchman, a fellow-servant, was argued before it. When Chief-Justice Shaw, who rendered the opinion in that famous case, Farwell *v.* Boston & Worcester Railroad Corporation, decided that the employee could afford to bear the burden of the accident better than the poor railroad, he little realized what a giant the pigmy industry which implored his protection would shortly become, and what a fetish the stone wall erected by him on the foundation laid by Lord Abinger, in Priestley *v.* Fowler, would prove even today. Nor was this the first precedent on this side of the water for the doctrine that the workman assumes as a risk of his employment all injuries due to a fellow-servant's negligence. Chief-Justice Shaw cited with approval the decision made the previous year by a majority of the Court of Appeals of South Carolina, that a fireman who, like John McGillicuddy, had lost a leg through the carelessness of his engine-driver was left without a remedy against the corporation. If all employers of labor were to be held responsible to those in their service for injuries not due to the negligence of the employer, who might not be rendered bankrupt by a servant's blunder?

All this I straightway pointed out to Josephine by way of enlightenment, lest her outraged sympathies should lead her to commit some fresh contempt of court before I could make plain to her that had she been alive when this hardy perennial fiction of an implied contract on the part of the wage-earner originated, she would unquestionably have accepted it like the rest of the educated world as the quintessence of human sagacity. And sagacity it might still appear but for two new factors in human affairs. As a grandfather, I am in doubt which has been the more remarkable during the last half century: the development of mighty industrial mechanisms, twin products of steam and electricity, with all their train of dangerous occupations destructive to life and limb, or the growth of the sentiment, child of the brotherhood of man, that it is cruel to fasten the entire burden of a shattered life on the luckless being mangled or maimed in the course of industrial employment.

O the poor railroad! Yet even as we wagged our heads in approbation of this formula, the infant revolutionizer of traffic had attained the dimensions of an octopus, and we found ourselves listening to a siren plea, evolved from the heart rather than the brain, and before which the sound lawyer stands confounded, if not aghast, even today—that the cost of maintaining those grieviously crippled in all hazardous callings pursued for the world's benefit should be charged to production. In other words, that the miner delving underground, the railroad employee, the factory operative, cheek by jowl with swiftly moving machinery, and the workman who daily inhales poisonous gases can no longer, without injustice, be thrown adrift on the world when incapacitated for further labor by the perils to which they are exposed; but that the business itself should, in some measure at least, provide an indemnity fund for the relief of the victims.

I could see Josephine's eyes brighten with approval as I enlarged on this doctrine, pointing out that though primarily a humanitarian world wave, it was also a common-sense compact between ethics and political economy at the expense of the mere shell of law. The phrases which I used—

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Employer's Liability Acts, Workingmen's Compensation Laws—were evidently so familiar to her—though I knew that she had only the haziest knowledge concerning them—as to cause her to appropriate them joyfully as a panacea for her distress, exclaiming:

"Of course, that's the solution, Fred. And doesn't it take care of poor John? Why," she added, "do you smile? What is it I don't understand?"

"Don't you consider the United States the most progressive and enlightened nation on the globe? The guide and the moving spirit in the world's attitude toward suffering humanity?"

She balked at the trap, though temperamentally patriotic. "I suppose so. Every now and then, however, I discover something about us that I didn't know before. I always took for granted that we invented progressive legacies taxes to reduce swollen fortunes until you informed me that they were known to the Egyptians. If I live a little longer, I expect to see everything under the sun traced to Rameses II. Yes, I have been accustomed to think that in humanitarianism at least we are a guide to the rest of the world."

"Then it may be something of a shock to you, dear, to be told that almost every civilized nation, excepting ourselves, has a Workingmen's Compensation Act in force to provide for just such cases as John McGillicuddy's. Germany led the way in 1884, over twenty-five years ago, followed by Austria in 1889. Autocratic governments, but they set the example. There is scarcely a European country, big or little, or a Colonial Dependency which has not joined the procession; Great Britain in 1897, France in 1898, Italy in the same year, even despotic Russia in 1903. And the list includes communities dissimilar as Finland, Luxemburg, Hungary, New South Wales, British Columbia, and the Cape of Good Hope. Legislation, which among most of the other nations is beginning to be regarded as ancient history, is in our native land hanging by the gills in the cold storage warehouse of our various State Capitals—buried in committee, referred to special commissions, wrangled over, postponed, and huddled out of sight."

"How infamous!" interposed Josephine, by way of not seeming to lack ardor in a cause where she felt sure she was right, but concerning the concrete merits of which she was conscious of profound ignorance.

"In Great Britain," I continued, "the employer is directly responsible to the workman and protects himself by voluntary insurance; in Germany the employer is not liable to the workman, but solely to mutual associations of employers in kindred trades, supervised by State officials, for the premiums assessed against him to cover the indemnities paid to the injured. The underlying principle in each case is the substitution of definite and compulsory compensation for uncertain liability enforced by speculative litigation. In most countries sickness insurance societies, supported partly by the employees and partly by the employers, provide for temporary disabilities; but prolonged or permanent incapacity for work is relieved by a sliding scale of direct money payments, for a fixed period or for life, charged, regardless of any but wilful negligence, to the cost of production. In some jurisdictions the act applies to all industrial accidents, in others it is limited to certain hazardous occupations; but in every instance it covers a wide range of employment and contemplates adequate relief to all grieviously disabled in the industrial world without reference to care or the lack of it."

"And why have we done nothing?" inquired Josephine with the reluctant sternness of a patriot dismayed by grim statistics.

"It wouldn't be exact to say we have done nothing; but until recently we have not accomplished a great deal. We have a rather feeble Federal Act, good as far as it goes, applicable to artisans and laborers employed by the United States in arsenals and navy-yards and in river and harbor fortification, under which compensation for disabling and fatal injuries is fixed at one year's earnings. But subsequent amendments, designed to extend the benefits of this law to all civilian employees of the Federal Government receiving less than three thousand dollars, and to raise the limit of compensation to seven years' wages, not exceeding seven thousand five hundred dollars in the aggregate, were defeated. The Sixty-first Congress, however, sanctioned the appointment of a Commission to inves-

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tigate the entire subject, and report not later than December, 1911. The several sovereign States on their part have been individually coquetting with the dilemma —often with considerable ardor—for a number of years. In a few States the "fellow-servant" dogma has been abrogated by statute; or prohibited as a defence in the case of railroads; and every lawyer knows that our Courts, stirred by pity, have strained their legal consciences in trying to whittle the obnoxious dogma by ingenious distinctions as to the limits of "fellow-service." In other States the fetish of "assumed risks" has been tempered and the doctrine of "contributory negligence" modified. With the general result, however, that legal liability as opposed to fixed compensation still remains the predominant theory of relief. The enactment, in 1909, in five different States, of Compensation Acts of varying scope, modelled substantially on that of Great Britain (supplemented by no less than half a dozen during the year ending December 31, 1911), seemed, I admit, to afford workmen who pursue dangerous callings, and the community overburdened by litigation caused by personal injuries, a glimpse of the promised land. But only for a brief moment. A stone wall has arisen in a single night, the work of exalted human intelligence grieved and contrite, but helpless. The New York Court of Appeals has lately declared that an act of the legislature, imposing compulsory compensation on the employers of workmen in certain callings exceptionally hazardous to life and limb, contravenes the provisions of the State and Federal Constitutions in purporting to authorize the taking of property without due process of law."

As I spoke by the card, my conclusion may have sounded bewilderingly solemn. At least Josephine shook her head with the air of one perplexed and said, "You will have to explain what that means"—a remark which she qualified by adding, "Men seem to have a convenient way of disposing of a thing they are opposed to by calling it unconstitutional."

"In this case, my dear," I hastened to assent, disregarding her generalization, "the judges said they were very sorry, admitted that it was a pity—almost apologized for running counter to the humanitarian movement of the age. But they explained that all economic, philosophical, and moral theories, however attractive and desirable, must play second fiddle to the Constitution, which prescribes that no man's property may be taken away without his leave except by due process of law. Some countries—England for instance—have no written constitutions. There the law-making body, Parliament, is supreme."

"How inconvenient! Couldn't we get rid of ours somehow?" murmured my wife. "Just think of the number of people without an appendix."

I realized that Josephine did not intend to be flippant. She was merely expressing aloud the not unnatural thought which had popped into her mind that if surgery could demonstrate that certain organs were superfluous, a similar experiment might be tried on the body politic. But I answered gravely:

"That would be out of the question. We might alter it, however. But an amendment to this particular clause of the Constitution would be no easy matter. We should have Hugh Armitt Dawson and most of our other friends pointing out that if property may be taken away on one excuse, why not another? To tell the truth, my dear," I added mournfully, "compulsory compensation appears to have struck a temporary snag. It remains to be seen whether the higher courts of other states will adopt the New York view regarding constitutionality. The first fruits of the decision has been the passage in 1911 by the legislatures of New Jersey, Illinois, and Wisconsin of Compensation Acts shorn through caution of the compulsory feature and thus optional to both parties, on the theory that half a loaf is better than no bread. This emasculation has been minimized, so far as possible by the abolition at the same time of the hoary defences of fellow service, negligence and assumption of risks in suits brought against employers who refuse to subscribe to the new provisions. I say temporary because I haven't a doubt that a people, so resourceful as ours and so prompt in redressing humanitarian wrongs after they have taken the trouble to comprehend them, will discover some method of evading this apparent bar to the validity of a reform which the rest of the civilized world adopted a quarter of a century ago. We cannot long

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remain content with our present system—the drawn-out agony of suits for personal injuries, with all their delay, contradictions of testimony and strain on the victims."

"I should think not," murmured Josephine, "if we have any common-sense."

She was silent a moment, then she said, "So far as I can see, poor John McGillicuddy, even if he recovers anything, is certain to have a hard time. Indeed, the only bright spot in the entire outlook is that he may decide to give his case to Harold."

I sympathized with my wife's ambitions as a grandmother, yet her concluding remark struck me humorously; so much so, that I felt impelled to add this corrective for her general edification.

"At present, of course, the services of a lawyer seem indispensable in every instance of severe personal injuries for which some one else may be held responsible. But I believe that Harold will live to see the day when all such liability—not merely for injuries sustained during employment, but anywhere—will be compensated out of court by fixed and graduated rules of indemnity. Not until then shall we be rid of the carnival of litigation which congests our courts and has almost transformed them into a gambling mart. The suits for personal injuries brought by employees number but a third of such cases. The remainder are due to the crying necessities or the greed of those disabled in the course of modern transportation or by the diverse powerful engines of modern society. To all of these the personal injury suit holds out prospects even more enticing than those of the stock market. A fortune—the means to get rich quickly—gleams within easy reach. And who spurs them on? Who fosters their hopes and even panders to their cupidity? The lawyer; who, as the high-priest and promoter of the orgy, sometimes seems the most formidable stumbling-block to reform of speculative litigation. But the reform is certain to come; for the machinery which maintains it has become too costly."

"I suppose so," said Josephine, as I paused, but her assent seemed a trifle reluctant, and I could follow the working of her mind which culminated in—"If so much of the law business consists of accident suits, and they are all abolished, what is to become of the poor lawyers?"

"You may rest assured, my dear," I answered, "that Harold will be a gray-haired man by then, and very likely on the bench. At the same time, you should bear in mind that it is not the function of a philosopher to protect any man's livelihood. There was a period when a successful buccaneer was regarded as an ornamental member of society."

VI

THE second of the two recent events, which led me to observe that we suddenly condemn as monstrous results complacently accepted yesterday, is a foster-brother to the first in that it also concerns the legal profession, and consequently the destinies of my grandson, Harold, who, as you may recall, is being groomed for future triumphs at the bar by Blackstone, Kent, Fogarty, and Einstein. Instead of foster-brother I would have written "cousin," had not the word become repugnant to me by reason of the event in question. For it was owing to a cousin, to three of them, in fact—distant cousins for whom the testator cared not an iota—that what seems to me legalized highway robbery has been perpetrated.

Most people in our community had lost sight of Peter Gillespie Merrill, who was found dead in his bed a year ago. He dropped out of general observation soon after he was fifty, and he was eighty-seven when he died. He came of well-known stock, however. One of his great grandmothers, as the name suggests, was a Gillespie, another a Gore, and he held the same relationship—second cousin once removed—to my old fashionable friend, Gillespie Gore, as to the three individuals, two men and one woman, who have succeeded in plundering his estate. He was a bachelor, rather a recluse, preferring his own society to that of most other people, and slightly eccentric in his attire, which conformed to the fashion of an elder day. Still sheltered by the roof under which he was born, although the locality had long since been given over to boarding-houses, he rode, with almost equal assiduity, two hobbies: the collecting of old prints and hospitality to cats. As a consequence, his dwelling which, brass knocker and all, was externally a well-preserved landmark, seemed,

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when one crossed the threshold, despite the white paint and scrupulous absence of dust, a sort of compromise between an art gallery and a menagerie, in so much as feline pets of high and low degree roamed at will and were accommodated with saucers.

These hobbies, so far as I could ever see, were the limit of his peculiarities. I recall meeting him in the street not many weeks before his sudden end. Chance had called me to his neighborhood, and, although I had not run across him for more than a year, he recognized me when I stopped and addressed him by name. His only apparent infirmity was a slight deafness, which he hastened to acknowledge by making a sounding-board of his hand. It struck me that his faculties were uncommonly alert for one of his age; his eye was still keen, his speech coherent and rational. Turning back with him for a block, I was surprised by his accurate familiarity with what was going on in the world.

It was found that he had left behind him two million dollars; a sum so much larger than had been written down in the estimation of those who pretend to know what others possess as to inspire the eager inquiry—where did it come from? He was admittedly thrifty, but the magnitude of his savings was wholly out of proportion to his patrimony. Presently, it transpired that, unknown to all but a very few, he had been a shrewd investor all his days; one of those calculating individuals with small expenses who possess the knack of turning over their securities at frequent intervals with unfailing profit.

By the terms of Peter Merrill's will, drawn with precision three years before his death, he endowed comfortably his housekeeper and two servants who had tended him for a generation, gave his valuable collection of prints to our museum of fine arts, made rather elaborate provision for the care of his cats for life, remembered by legacies several more or less impecunious acquaintances not of his blood, left a gold-headed cane, an ancestral snuff-box and a pair of alabaster vases to Gillespie Gore, and apportioned all the rest and residue of his estate among certain charitable and educational institutions.

A very sensible will, so every one said. The money was old Peter's, and he was free to deal with it as he chose. Any obligation imposed on the testator by the tie between him and his sole next of kin, as Gillespie Gore was supposed to be—that of second cousin once removed—was fully satisfied by the gift of the heirlooms specified, for the two men had seen nothing of each other for many years. Gillespie Gore is comfortably off. I doubt if he cherished expectations, unless, possibly, the furtive hope that the old gentleman might endeavor to keep death at bay by dying intestate. It may be taken for granted that he never harbored for a moment the suggestion that his kinsman was of other than sound and disposing mind.

You may imagine, therefore, my dismay, when it was reported to me that Peter Merrill's will was to be contested.

"By whom and for what reason?" I inquired indignantly of the informant, my grandson Harold.

"Three second cousins, once removed, who live in the suburbs, and who, if the will is set aside, would inherit as heirs-at-law. No reason is necessary if a jury can be induced to take pity on them and decide that, because they are poor, the testator ought to have left his money to them rather than to cats and charities. Page & Waterbury have entered an appearance for the contestants, and our firm represents the executor. We ought to win, but it's no walk-over. Matthew J. Page, tremulous with the hope of putting his paw on two millions in gilt-edged securities, is no pipe-dream adversary before a jury."

The cool artlessness of this statement drew from me the retort, "But surely the law requires more adequate reasons for setting aside a will than the prejudices of a jury and the greed of counsel."

My grandson laughed and cocked his head on one side. "Good for you, grandpa. I never heard it stated quite so sarcastically before." He proceeded to light a cigarette, and, throwing one leg over the arm of the easy chair in which he was sitting, continued: "Of course, there are only three legal grounds on which any will can be broken: lack of testamentary capacity, undue influence, or defective attestation—as the judge invariably points out. If the jury doesn't like the will, it has to find one of these. But that's easy. It simply has to say—'the provisions don't suit us, and he must have been crazy.' The old-

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fashioned doctrine that a testator has vested rights has been virtually exploded. It's argued now that the dead will be dead a long time, and that the claims of the living are chiefly to be considered. No one blames a jury for breaking the will of a man who disinherits his children. It's the same spirit of rule of thumb justice which impels the jury in an accident case to disdain the strict letter of the law and soak the defendant a little in order to give the poor devil who is knocked out some pecuniary salve for his injuries. I'm inclined, however, to agree with you, grandpa, that the pendulum has swung too far. It's one thing to protect children or very near kin from the eccentricities of senile or jaundiced testators, and quite another to give the encouragement of society to marauding attacks organized by remote relatives for the sake of plunder. The big fortunes are a temptation; a lot of money is so necessary nowadays. And the lawyers who conduct the attacks are lured by the large fees."

"Piratical," I murmured with the fervor of one brought up to believe that a last will and testament was a sacred document.

"Now take our case," my grandson resumed, with the decorum of one arguing the matter with himself and at the same time enlightening ignorance. "Everybody knows that Mr. Peter Merrill made just the will he intended, and, though a little queer, was of sound mind. But think what a chance—a splendid gambling chance—for the second cousins for whom he did not care a button. If dust can be thrown in the jury's eyes in one way or another they will get the goods. A splendid gambling chance for them and for Page & Waterbury—one of the few chances of quick profits we have left. Democracy means to be moral, but it sympathizes with gambling chances and hates to see them all disappear. No one can be perfectly sure what will happen. The other side has got hold of a nurse whom the housekeeper discharged as incompetent, and who will testify, undoubtedly, that the testator's partiality for cats was the vagary of a lunatic. Not very many wills are broken, but a pitched battle is usually in store nowadays for the legatees of any one who leaves a lot of money and passes over his or her relations."

Notwithstanding this lucid summary, which revealed that even in the mind of the generation just in the saddle there are misgivings in regard to current conditions, I was not wholly prepared for the upshot.

Two months later Peter Merrill's will came up for probate before a single judge, and after minute cross-examination of the attesting witnesses in the hope of discovering some flaw in the attestation, Mr. Matthew Page opened his attack by calling to the stand, as my grandson had predicted, the discharged nurse, a very pretty and plausible young woman, who told a glib story of the testator's eccentricities concerning cats. How he treated them like children, dandling and even embracing them; how he visited every pet in turn, morning and night; how half a dozen slept in his room, three upon his bed; and how these special favorites occupied chairs at the dinner table. Although forbidden under the rules of law from stating her opinion regarding the testator's sanity, the witness managed nevertheless to volunteer the remark that he was mad as a March hare. Whereupon the judge, as in duty bound, sustained counsel's objection by the words, "You are not allowed to say that, and I strike it out." But he spoke mildly, and it was obvious to me, who was present in court ready to testify to the contrary, that he was impressed by her good looks.

Be that as it may, she proved a star witness, for when Mr. Fogarty took her in hand and endeavored on cross-examination to discredit her testimony, by inquiring into the circumstances of her discharge, she failed to become ruffled and threw the blame in so appealing a fashion on the housekeeper, whose appearance betokened a sour disposition, that I must admit I understood what my grandson meant in declaring later that a jury would be disposed to side with such a peach. The contestants supplemented this testimony with that of a chore man, once in the employ of Peter Merrill, but not provided for in the will, who gave similar details regarding the testator's inordinate predilection for cats. When this witness had left the stand, Mr. Fogarty rested with the mysterious air of one who, having exhibited to his opponent certain telling cards, is clearly reserving others up his sleeve. When the judge decided to admit the will to probate, he seemed slightly pained, as if an injustice had been done him, but Harold assured me in a whisper

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that this was for stage effect only and that the real contest would take place on appeal before a jury.

I have never been able to comprehend why two trials on the facts are requisite in a will case if one suffices to convict of murder. I have been told on inquiry—invariably by lawyers—that but for the opportunity to probe into the influences surrounding a testator, which this preliminary day in court affords, the machinations of the designing might often escape detection; and that few attorneys would like to see the time-honored custom discontinued. I understand better, since the culmination of the Peter Merrill will contest, why they do not favor any change. The upshot to which I referred was briefly this: My grandson announced to me in a cheery voice some sixty days after the trial in the Probate Court that the case had been compromised.

"Compromised?" I repeated. "Do you mean that your clients have consented to pay those people anything?"

Harold nodded, but I could see that he already regretted having broached the subject. "Mr. Kent and Mr. Fogarty both advised a settlement," he continued. "There was a chance of losing before a jury, and we felt it our duty to impress the possibility of such a result on the several legatees, who finally decided to accept less all round in order to make sure of the remainder."

"It savors of blackmail," I murmured. "Every one knows that Peter Merrill was perfectly sane, and that his will was a carefully prepared statement of his last wishes."

"Unfortunately, the lawyer who drew the will is dead."

"But surely the testimony of those disgruntled witnesses would not counterbalance that of the rest of his acquaintances, including Gillespie Gore who is himself an heir."

"It would have been just like Mr. Matt Page to suggest an aristocratic conspiracy among the testator's friends to minimize his eccentricities in order to defeat the claims of his needy kinsmen and enrich institutions already wealthy. I can assure you, grandpa," he added solemnly, "that all the partners think the compromise a very sensible one, and that, considering the risks and the amount at stake, the legatees got off lightly."

"Lightly?" I queried. "I cannot imagine paying those second cousins more than five thousand dollars apiece."

My grandson smiled compassionately. "It isn't to be noised about, but the terms of settlement are these: The will is admitted to probate, but each of the three contesting heirs receives one hundred thousand dollars. Mr. Matt Page gets forty thousand in cash for his services and our firm forty-five thousand. The amounts paid counsel won't appear in the compromise agreement filed in court lest they should attract the attention of the judge, whose salary is so small."

I do not know whether I was more dazed by the figures or by my grandson's placid utterance of them. My eyes felt like saucers as I blurted out:

"Nearly four hundred thousand at one fell swoop! That's going some, as you young people express it. The old-fashioned buccaneers were greenhorns compared to their successors."

Harold smiled at my recourse to his vernacular, but he had his defence against my strictures ready. "Yes, it's going a little, I admit, but nothing compared with what happens in business. The bankers who float bonds get a much larger rake-off. A will case like Mr. Merrill's doesn't come along every day—probably not oftener than half a dozen times in any successful lawyer's career. And just consider how long he has to wait at the outset before he obtains any business at all. If a lawyer isn't employed by one of the big corporations or doesn't go in for personal injury suits for the plaintiff, the pickings of his profession are apt to be pretty small compared with the cost of modern living. And so when a fat thing does turn up, he owes it to himself and his family to make a fairly remunerative charge. Two or three fees like that would make a man comfortable for life. As I explained before, Mr. Peter Gillespie Merrill is dead and can never come to life again, and the money is his no longer. Everybody is contented; and, as all concerned have gone off smiling and happy, I don't quite see, grandpa, with due respect, why you should introduce the only discordant note."

I am sure you will agree with me that my grandson is cut out for a lawyer. No one could listen to his harangue without ad-

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mitting its lucid and cogent plausibility. For a moment I felt convicted of a gratuitous attempt to deprive the legal fraternity of its daily bread, and I congratulated myself that Josephine was not in the room. It is indeed too late for a grandfather to challenge the world's conclusion that a dead testator is no more formidable than a dead lion. Between his legatees and his heirs the courts have ceased to interfere, provided, as Harold says, every one goes off smiling and happy. Moreover, the roll-call of lawyers is growing every year and to preserve their social status, which has been sadly overshadowed by the financial magnates, some method of making up for the lean years must be preserved.

At the same time, what a very costly proceeding for everybody concerned except the attorneys and the predatory next of kin is this modern looting of what the dead leave behind them. In this era of dazzling fortunes swiftly accumulated, the gambling chance—the hope of obtaining something for nothing—especially when dignified by the legal sanction of very thin blood relationship, has a peculiar hold on society, which democracy seems loth to relinquish. Yet it has done away with the lottery in other attractive forms. The testator may be a dead lion, but those to whom he bequeaths his estate have substantial rights which stand to-day in dire need of some relief from the growing abuse of concerted attacks on testamentary disposition.

Perhaps inertia, due to the dread of a much occupied nation to abandon the beaten path—not merely beaten, but macadamized by tradition—is the most formidable stumbling-block to reform. I realized this as soon as I broached my disgust with the existing situation to my friend Judge Sims, another member of my dinner club, who in his official capacity has much to do with wills. He admitted and deplored the evil, allowing my statement that at least sixty per cent of will contests are nothing but a legalized form of extortion or robbery to pass unchallenged. But when I inquired why we continue to put up with it he frowned ominously and remarked that it was not easy to decide which of the two corner-stones of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence is the more precious—the free man's right to do as he sees fit with his own, including the solemn privilege of cutting off his own children with a shilling, or the free man's right as an heir at law to dispute testamentary capacity.

Unenlightened, but not venturing unaided to measure arguments with an expert in his own field, I bethought me of enlisting for a pecuniary consideration the services of my grandson Harold to prime me for the fray. Consequently, the next time I met the judge, I had ready for him the retort:

"We shall never get rid of the abuse until we either authorize the probate of wills before death, or adopt and give due weight to the formalities which attend the execution of wills in countries where the civil law prevails. There are many who would go a step further and imitate the civil law in forbidding the disinheritance of children beyond a certain point—as in France, for instance, where gifts to others by will may not exceed one-half of an estate if the testator leaves one child, one-third if he leaves two, and one-fourth if a greater number. As a practical matter with us the jury finds in nine cases out of ten that the man who cuts his own children off with a shilling is crazy; and we have already set precise limits by statute to the amount of which any husband or wife may deprive the other. There are strong grounds for holding that the father of a family owes at least one-third of his accumulations, willy-nilly, to his children, whose unfilial qualities may be due to inheritance of his own peculiarities. But be that as it may, the essential thing is to devise some method of keeping at bay and thwarting the cupidity of the marauding army of collateral relatives, beginning with nephews and nieces and stretching out to remotest next of kin."

Judge Sims looked at me with the reserved air of one who, though he sympathizes, is appalled by the difficulties, and who consequently resents the fluent criticisms of the amateur. "One matter at a time, if you please." And then he continued, as Harold had predicted—for the judge is erudite in his way— "The probate of wills before death was attempted in Michigan nearly thirty years ago, in 1883 I believe. But the Supreme Court of the State held the act of the Legislature unconstitutional. The express ground of the decision was that the statute permitting the establishment of wills during lifetime, after notice to heirs-at-law, was defective in that

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it failed to require similar notice to be given to a wife. The testator in the case had utilized the statute for the express purpose of excluding his wife and a son from the benefits of the will. One member of the court proceeds to point out the inherent lack of legal logic in the entry of a judicial decree which may never bind the party seeking it. For what would prevent the maker of a will from revoking it, altering its provisions or moving into another State and dying elsewhere in a totally different testamentary state of mind? To proclaim as valid a judicial decree which might never be binding on anybody would introduce a revolutionary and grotesque legal novelty."

Although, thanks to my grandson's research, I had read the opinion of the court in question, I refrained from an immediate response out of deference to this awful combination of unconstitutionality and total failure in legal logic. It may be that these will prove insurmountable obstacles to ante-mortem probate in Anglo-Saxon territory, for this flower of American western civilization has never blossomed again since nipped in the bud by the frosty breath of the Supreme Court of the State from whose necessities it sprung.

Yet what a precious anodyne to the sensibilities of many a testator would be the knowledge that he was free, if he chose, to establish his will before death without fear of subsequent attack from distant relatives whom he wished to exclude from its provisions. Nor as a layman was I much moved when my friend Judge Sims subseqently expressed misgivings based on a haunting fear lest the comely and designing second wives of aged men should steer them into court for the fell purpose of testamentary plunder. Is it not reasonable to assume that, if ante-mortem probate were legal, the courts would apply or the legislature prescribe such safeguards in the way of examination of the parties by the judge before whom wills were proved as would render the possible miscarriage of justice insignificant in comparison with that rampant to-day under the protection of our legal system from one end of this easy-going country to the other?

But an avenue for partial reform is indicated by the very language of the same court which declared the statute authorizing the probate of wills before death to be in violation of the State Constitution. The passage merits reproduction exactly as I read it to my cautious legal friend Judge Sims, from volume fifty-six of the Michigan reports:

"This statute which was probably designed to prevent the unseemly and disgraceful attempts, too often made, to defeat the enforcement of the last will of persons whose competency to deal with their own affairs was never doubted or interfered with, has been so drawn as to remove none of the difficulties, but rather to make them worse. It is a singular, and in my judgment, a very unfortunate spectacle to see a man compelled to enter upon a contest with the hungry expectants of his own estate, and litigate, while living, with those who have no legal claims whatever upon him, but who may subject him to ruinous costs and delays in meeting such testimony as is apt to be paraded in such cases. The practice, which has usually prevailed in civil law countries, and also is said to have been customary in various parts of England (see Seld. Ecc. Jur. Test. 5), of having wills executed or declared in solemn form, or acknowledged before reputable public officers and a sufficient number of disinterested witnesses to render it unlikely that the testator is not acting with capacity and freedom, has been approved by the continued experience of most countries, and has saved them from the post-mortem squabblings and contests on mental condition which have made a will the least secure of all human dealings, and made it doubtful whether in some regions insanity is not accepted as the normal condition of testators. There is no sensible reason why a will, which is always revocable and contingent, should not be established, presumptively at least, by such an acknowledgment as will suffice to prove a deed which is irrevocable."

How haphazard the preparations for the making of a will in this country are apt to be! Whom does the average lawyer invite to attest the solemn disposition of his client's estate? His stenographer, some student in the office, or casual acquaintance on the same floor; wholly unfamiliar with the testator, if not mere birds of passage; whose faculties, perfunctorily exercised, can recall nothing but the hazy fact of signature when tested subsequently on the witness-stand.

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Why, in connection with one of the most serious of human affairs, should we disdain the use of ceremonials which would give an inherent probative force to our action? If it be argued that dying testators cannot always procure the attendance of an official whose affidavit and seal would carry weight, and that in a free country they ought to be at liberty to call on strangers to attest their signatures rather than on friends who know them and might babble, it would seem reasonable that legislatures should at least establish some presumption of validity in favor of wills executed under more formal conditions. Let the formalities—the safeguards—be as elaborate as those who frame our laws deem necessary. If they share the popular Anglo-Saxon prejudice against the notary as a routine functionary who might become an easy tool, it would be a simple matter to require also the affidavit of physicians or even of a judge after careful interrogation as a condition precedent to the erection of a rampart between testators and their greedy kin.

Surely our society needs some such protection. The blackmail and extortion current here are practically unknown in foreign countries where the notarial system of attestation prevails. If it were the law that a will carefully executed under prescribed forms should have the presumption of validity, and could be set aside only by convincing testimony, we should have taken a long step toward checking the crying abuse of speculative attacks on wills. Assuming also—though this is not yet settled—that there may be inherent difficulties, either of law or propriety, in the way of probate before death, the present situation might be further improved by imposing some restraint on the action of distant relatives. When a wealthy testator dies childless, his brothers and sisters, and even nephews and nieces, may not unnaturally hope to share his bounty, though his right is an absolute one, under existing law, to leave all his property to strangers or charities. But the claims of more distant kin—comprehensively grouped as cousins—seem so tenuous that they could, with advantage to the moral sense of the community, be limited by a provision that an attack on a will by persons not nearer in relationship to the testator than a fixed degree should not be undertaken except with the assent of the attorney-general of the State or other substituted proctor.

As I detailed these animadversions in the presence of my friend Judge Sims, I noticed that he nodded approvingly from time to time, and, though he was evidently obsessed by the difficulties of modifying an ancient system of procedure, I felt sure that my remarks would not lie fallow in his mind. But when I repeated them to my grandson, he reflected a moment, and then indulged in the breezy comment:

"That would read well on paper, grandpa. But I don't believe the lawyers would stand for it."

"On the contrary, Harold," I answered, "and here, perhaps, my years and experience enable me to discriminate better than you. The lawyers are among the first to advocate any reform—though it affect themselves—provided they can find time to consider it carefully. The chief opposition will emanate from that portion of the community which regards a will contest as a piratical means of securing a windfall under sanction of law. But you and I are both bound to believe that they are only a small minority in our beloved country."

(To be continued.)

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HALF-TOLD TALES

by

HENRY VAN DYKE

Illustrated by Garth Jones

THE UNRULY SPRITE

A Partial Fairy Tale

THERE was once a man who was also a writer of books.

The merit of his books lies beyond the horizon of this tale. No doubt some of them were good, and some of them were bad, and some were merely popular. But he was all the time trying to make them better, for he was quite an honest man, and thankful that the world should give him a living for his writing. Moreover, he found great delight in the doing of it, which was something that did not enter into the world's account—a kind of daily Christmas present in addition to his wages.

But the interesting thing about the man was that he had a clan or train of little sprites attending him—small, delicate, aerial creatures, who came and went around him at their pleasure, and showed him wonderful things, and sang to him, and kept him from being discouraged, and often helped him with his work.

If you ask me what they were and where they came from, I must frankly tell you that I do not know. Neither did the man know. Neither does anybody else know.

But the man had sense enough to understand that they were real—just as real as any of the other mysterious things, like microbes, and polonium, and chemical affinities, and the northern lights, by which we are surrounded. Sometimes it seemed as if they were the children of the flowers that die in blooming; and sometimes as if they came in a flock with the birds from the south; and sometimes as if they rose one by one from the roots of the trees in the deep forest or from the waves of the sea when the moon lay upon them; and sometimes as if they appeared suddenly in the streets of the city after the people had passed by and the houses had gone to sleep. They were as light as thistle-down, as unsubstantial as mists upon the mountain, as wayward and flickering as will-o'-the-wisps.

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But there was something immortal about them, and the man knew that the world would be nothing to him without their presence and comradeship.

Most of these attendant sprites were gentle and docile; but there was one who had a strain of wildness in him. In his hand he carried a bow, and at his shoulder a quiver of arrows, and he looked as if, some day or other, he might be up to mischief.

Now this man was much befriended by a certain lady, to whom he used to bring his stories in order that she might tell him whether they were good, or bad, or merely popular. But whatever she might think of the stories, always she liked the man, and of the airy fluttering sprites she grew so fond that it almost seemed as if they were her own children. This was not unnatural, for they were devoted to her; they turned the pages of her book when she read; they made her walks through the forest pleasant and friendly; they lit lanterns for her in the dark; they brought flowers to her and sang to her, as well as to the man. Of this he was glad, because of his great friendship for the lady and his desire to see her happy.

But one day she complained to him of the sprite who carried the bow. "He is behaving badly," said she; "he teases me."

"That surprises me," said the man, "and I am distressed to hear it; for at heart he is rather good, and to you he is deeply attached. But how does he tease you, dear lady? What does he do?"

"Oh, nothing," she answered, "and that is what annoys me. The others are all busy with your affairs or mine. But this idle one follows me like my shadow, and looks at me all the time. It is not at all polite. I fear he has a vacant mind and has not been well brought up."

"That may easily be," said the man, "for he came to me very suddenly one day, and I have never inquired about his education."

"But you ought to do so," said she; "it is your duty to have him taught to know his place, and not to tease, and other useful lessons."

"You are always right," said the man, "and it shall be just as you say."

On the way home he talked seriously to the sprite, and told him how impolite he had been, and arranged a plan for his schooling in botany, diplomacy, music, psychology, deportment, and other useful studies.

The rest of the sprites came in to the school-room every day, to get some of the profitable lessons. They sat around quiet and orderly, so that it was quite like a kindergarten. But the principal pupil was restless and troublesome.

"You are never still," said the man; "you have an idle mind and wandering thoughts."

"No!" said the sprite, shaking his head. "It is true, my mind is not on my lessons. But my thoughts do not wander at all. They always follow yours."

Then the man stopped talking, and the other sprites laughed behind their hands. But the one who had been reproved went on drawing pictures in the back of his botany book. The face in the pictures was always the same, but none of them seemed to satisfy him, for he always rubbed them out and began over again.

After several weeks of hard work the master thought his pupil must have learned something, so he gave him a holiday, and asked him what he would like to do.

"Go with you," he answered, "when you take her your new stories."

So they went together, and the lady complimented the writer on his success as an educator.

"Your pupil does you credit," said she; "he talks very nicely about botany and deportment. But I am a little troubled to see him looking so pale. Perhaps you have been too severe with him. I must take him out in the garden with me every day to play a while."

"You have a kind heart," said the man, "and I hope he will appreciate it."

This agreeable and amicable life continued for some weeks, and everybody was glad that affairs had arranged themselves. But one day the lady brought a new complaint.

"He is a strange little creature, and he has begun to annoy me in the most extraordinary way."

"That is bad," said the man. "What does he do now?"

"Oh, nothing," she answered, "and that is just the trouble. When I want to talk about you, he refuses, and says he does not like you as much as he used to. When I propose to play a game, he says he is tired

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and would rather sit under a tree and hear stories. When I tell them he says they do not suit him, they all end happily, and that is stupid. He is very perverse. But he clings to me like a bur. He is always teasing me to tell him the name of every flower in my garden and give him one of every kind."

"Is he rude about it?"

"Not exactly rude, but he is all the more annoying because he is so polite, and I always feel that he wants something different."

"He must not do that," said the man. "He must learn to want what you wish."

"But how can he learn what I wish? I do not always know that myself."

"It may be difficult," said the man, "but all the same he must learn it for your sake. I will deal with him."

So he took the unruly sprite out into the desert and gave him a sound beating with thorn branches. The blood ran down the poor little creature's arms and legs, and the tears down the man's cheeks. But the only words that he said were: "You must learn to want what she wishes—do you hear?—you must want what she wishes." At last the sprite whimpered and said: "Yes, I hear; I will wish what she wants." Then the man stopped beating him, and went back to his house, and wrote a little story that was really good.

But the sprite lay on his face in the desert for a long time, sobbing as if his heart would break. Then he fell asleep and laughed in his dreams. When he awoke it was night and the moon was shining silver. He rubbed his eyes and whispered to himself: "Now I must find out what she wants." With that he leaped up, and the moonbeams washed him white as he passed through them to the lady's house.

The next afternoon when the man came to read her the really good story she would not listen.

"No," she said, "I am very angry with you."

"Why?"

"You know well enough."

"Upon my honor, I do not."

"What?" cried the lady. "You profess ignorance, when he distinctly said——"

"Pardon," said the man; "but *who* said?"

"Your unruly sprite," she answered, indignant. "He came last night outside my window, which was wide open for the moon, and shot an arrow into my breast—a little baby arrow, but it hurt. And when I cried out for the pain, he climbed up to me and kissed the place, saying that would make it well. And he swore that you made him promise to come. If that is true, I will never speak to you again."

"Then of course," said the man, "it is not true. And now what do you want me to do with this unruly sprite?"

"Get rid of him," said she, firmly.

"I will," replied the man, and he bowed over her hand and went away.

He stayed for a long time—nearly a week—and when he came back he brought several sad verses with him to read. "They are very dull," said the lady; "what is the matter with you?" He confessed that he did not know, and began to talk learnedly about the Greek and Persian poets, until the lady was consumed with a fever of dulness.

"You are simply impossible!" she cried. "I wonder at myself for having chosen such a friend!"

"I am sorry indeed," said the man.

"For what?"

"For having disappointed you as a friend, and also for having lost my dear unruly sprite who kept me from being dull."

"Lost him!" exclaimed the lady. "How?"

"By now," said the man, "he must be quite dead, for I tied him to a tree in the forest five days ago and left him to starve."

"You are a brute," said the lady, "and a very stupid man. Come, take me to the tree. At least we can bury the poor sprite, and then we shall part forever."

So he took her by the hand and guided her through the woods, and they talked much of the sadness of parting forever.

When they came to the tree, there was the little sprite, with his wrists and ankles bound, lying upon the moss. His eyes were closed, and his body was white as a snowdrop. They knelt down, one on each side of him, and untied the cord. To their surprise his hands felt warm. "I believe he is not quite dead," said the lady. "Shall we try to bring him 'round?" asked the man. And with that they fell to chafing his wrists and his palms. Presently he gave each of them a slight pressure of the fingers.

"Did you feel that?" cried she.

"Indeed I did," the man answered. "It shook me to the core. Would you like to

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take him on your lap so that I can chafe his feet?"

The lady nodded and took the soft little body on her knees and held it close to her, while the man kneeled before her rubbing the small, milk-white feet with strong and tender touches. Presently, as they were thus engaged, they heard the sprite faintly whispering, while one of his eyelids flickered:

"I think—if each of you—would kiss me—on opposite cheeks—at the same moment—those kind of movements would revive me."

The two friends looked at each other, and the man spoke first.

"He talks ungrammatically, and I think he is an incorrigible little savage, but I love him. Shall we try his idea?"

"If you love him," said the lady, "I am willing to try, provided you shut your eyes."

So they both shut their eyes and tried.

But just at that moment the unruly sprite slipped down, and put his hands behind their heads, and the two mouths that sought his cheeks met lip to lip in a kiss so warm, so long, so sweet that everything else was forgotten.

Now you can easily see that as the persons who had this strange experience were the ones who told me the tale, their forgetfulness at this point leaves it of necessity half-told. But I know from other sources that the man who was also a writer went on making books, and the lady always told him truly whether they were good, or bad, or merely popular. But what the unruly sprite is doing now nobody knows.

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A CHANGE OF AIR

THERE were three neighbors who lived side by side in a certain village. They were bound together by the contiguousness of their back yards and front porches, and by a community of interest in taxes and water-rates and the high cost of living. They were separated by their religious opinions; for one of them was a Mystic, and the second was a Sceptic, and the other was a suppressed Dyspeptic who called himself an Asthmatic.

These differences were very dear to them, and laid the foundations of a lasting friendship in a nervous habit of interminable argument on all possible subjects. Their wives did not share in these disputations because they were resolved to be neighborly, and they could not conceive a difference of opinion without a personal application. So they called one another Clara and Caroline and Katharine, and kissed audibly whenever they met, but they were careful to confine their conversation to topics upon which they had only one mind, such as the ingratitude of domestic servants.

The husbands, however, as often as they could get together without the mollifying influence of the feminine presence, continued their debates with delightful ferocity, finding matter in each event of life, though clear, and especially in those which had not yet occurred. So they had a very happy time, and their friendship deepened from day to day.

"I can see your point of view," one of them would say, after an apparently harmless proposition had been advanced. "Perhaps so," the other would reply, clinging desperately to the advantage of the first service in definitions, "but you certainly do not understand it."

Whereupon the third had the pleasure of showing that neither of the others knew what he was talking about. This invariably resulted in their combining against him, and usually to his gain, because he was able to profit by the inconsistencies of their double play.

But of all earthly pleasures, as Sancho Panza said, there cometh in the end satiety. The neighbors, after several years of refreshing colloquial combat, felt an alarming decline of virility and the approach of an anæmic peace. Their arguments grew

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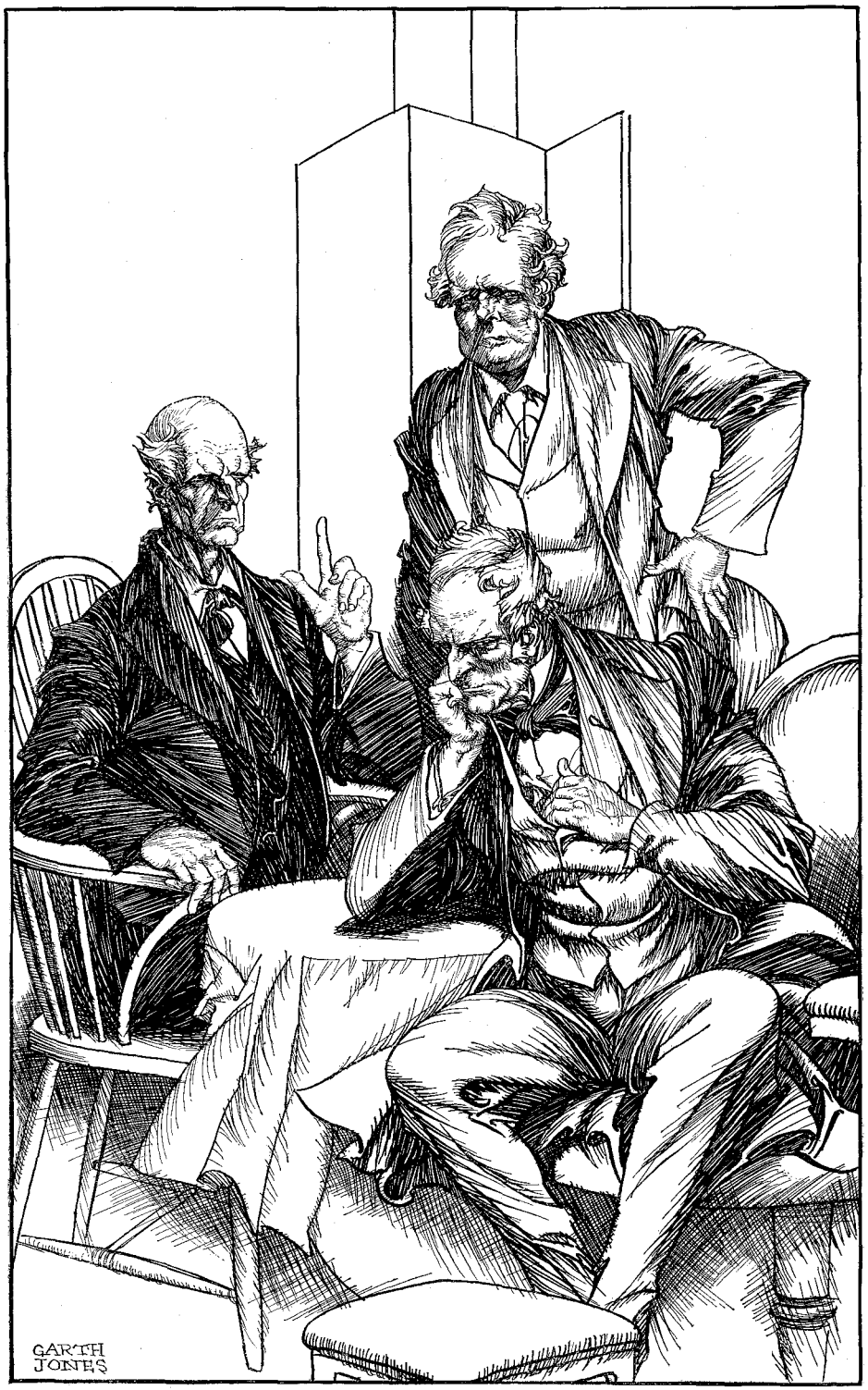

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monotonous, remote, repetitious, amounting to little more than a bald statement of position: "Here I stand"—"There you stand"—"There he stands,"—"What is the use of talking about it?" The salt and pepper had vanished from their table of conversation, and as each man silently chewed his own favorite cereal, they all felt as if the banqueting-days were ended and each must say to the others:

"Grow old apart from me,
The worst is yet to be."

One night as they were about to separate, long before midnight, without a single spirited controversy, they looked at one another sadly, as men who felt the approach of a common misfortune.

"The trouble is," said the Mystic, who disliked nothing so much as solitude, "we do not meditate enough, and so the springs of our inspiration from the Oversoul are running dry."

"The trouble is," said the Sceptic, whose doubts were more dogmatic than dogmas, "that our fixed ideas are choking the feed-pipes of our minds."

"The trouble is," wheezed the Asthmatic, whose suppressed dyspepsia gave him an enormous appetite, "modern life is demoralized, especially in domestic service. In the last month my wife has had five cooks, and she whom she now has is not a cook. Hygiene is the basis of sound thinking."

This sudden and unexpected renewal of the joy of disputation cheered them greatly, and they discussed it for several hours, arriving, as usual, at the same practical conclusion from the most diverse premises.

They all agreed that the trouble was.

To cure it nothing could be better than a change of air. So they resolved to make a little journey together.

They went first to New York, and the size of it impressed them immensely. The Sceptic was delighted with the cathedral of St. John the Divine, because, as he said, it was so unmistakably human. The Mystic was delighted with the theatres, because, as he said, most of the plays seemed so superhuman. The Asthmatic was delighted with the subway, because, as he said, the ventilation was so satisfactory. It was like eating bread-pudding on a steamboat, you knew exactly what you were getting; all the microbes were blended, and they neutralized each other.

Their next point of visitation was Chicago, where they had heard that a new literary school was arising with a noise like thunder out of the lake. They attended many club-meetings, and revolved rapidly in the highest literary circles, coming around invariably to the point from which they had started.

"This is tiresome," said the Mystic; "the Oversoul is not in it."

"It is narrowing," said the Sceptic; "these people are the most bigoted unbelievers I ever saw."

"It is unwholesome," said the Asthmatic, "but I think I could digest the stuff if I could only breathe more easily. This wind is too strong for me."

So they agreed to go to Philadelphia for a rest. The clerk in the colonial hotel to which they repaired assured them that the house was crowded—he had only one room, a parlor, which he could fit up with three beds if they would accept it.

The room was large and old-fashioned. A tall bookcase with glass doors stood against the wall. The three beds were arranged, side by side, in the middle of the room. "This is like home," cried the neighbors, and they lay until midnight in a sweet ferocity of dispute over the moral character of Benjamin Franklin.

A couple of hours later the Asthmatic was awakened from a sound sleep by a terrible attack of short breathing.

"Open the window," he gasped; "I am choking to death."

The Mystic sprang from bed and groped along the wall for the electric-light button, but could not find it. Then he groped for the window and his hand touched the glass.

"It is fastened," he cried; "I can't find the catch. It will not move up or down."

"I shall die," groaned the Asthmatic, "unless I have air. Break the window-pane!"

So the Mystic felt for the footstool, over which he had just stubbed his toes, and used the corner of it to smash the glass.

"Ah," said the Asthmatic, with a long sigh of relief, "I am better. There is nothing like fresh air."

Then they all went to sleep again.

The morning roused them slowly, and they lay on their backs looking around the room. The windows were closed and the shades drawn.

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But the glass door of the book-case had a great hole in it!

"You see!" said the Mystic. "It was the faith cure. The Oversoul cured you."

"Not at all," said the Sceptic. "It was the doubt cure. The way to get rid of a thing is to doubt it."

"I think," said the Asthmatic, "that it was the nightmare, and that miscellaneous cooking is the cause of human misery. We have travelled enough, and yet we have found no better air than we left at home."

So they went back to the certain village and continued their disputations very happily for the rest of their lives.

FIFTY YEARS AFTER

By Benjamin R. C. Low

It matters now no more whose eyes were best,—
Which saw at nearest hand the truest truth;
It matters, that both poured their clearest youth
And bravest treasure at the truth's behest.
Truth has her north and south, and each to each,
Being a whole wide world apart, appears
Far gone in error,—bigots with stuffed ears:
They fly to arms; and perish in the breach.
And yet . . . they died for truth . . . both sides . . . we know.
Their blood still warms the interlying land;
In every wind their haunting bugles blow,
And flitting shadow-shapes, like storm clouds, meet
In forest glades; and where old bridges spanned
Deep streams, are heard, still, still, their tramping feet.

They leave us not, these dead, but gird us round,
Full panoplied, alert, on either hand;
Marching with her, the reunited land,—
Making her borders undisputed ground.
They leave us not, whose handing-on is ours,—
Unselfishness of valor and bright deeds!
By them we know 'tis not in vain he bleeds
Whose country rears her children on such flowers.

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SAMUEL F. B. MORSE, THE PAINTER

By Edward L. Morse

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PAINTINGS BY MORSE

IN a corner of one of the work-rooms of the Yale School of the Fine Arts hangs a large canvas, unframed, depicting Hercules on his funeral pyre tearing at the fatal shirt of Nessus.

In another room is a small plaster cast of this same mythological hero in his death agony, and there is also in the possession of the Art School a gold medal, testifying that to one Samuel F. B. Morse had been awarded in 1813 the Adelphi gold medal for the best original cast of a single figure.

The history of the circumstances leading up to the painting of this picture and the moulding of this tiny statuette, gleaned from century-old letters and manuscripts, is an interesting one. Just a hundred years ago a young American was enthusiastically pursuing the study of painting in London. In after years he achieved undying fame as the inventor of the system of telegraphy which is still in universal use, and his renown as an inventor has so overshadowed his career as an artist that but few at the present day know that he is counted among the very best of the American painters of the first half of the nineteenth century.

At that time there was practically no encouragement of the fine arts in America; there were no schools of art where even the rudiments of the profession could be learned, and there was nothing left for the aspiring neophyte to do but to take the long trip in a sailing vessel to Europe, and sit at the feet of the masters of the old world.

London was the natural Mecca for many of these pilgrims, for at the head of the Royal Academy was Benjamin West, an American; there was no need to learn another language, and patrons were many and intelligent.

Samuel Finley Breese Morse had just graduated from Yale College, in 1810, and his wise parents, seeing that his heart was set on an artistic career, and being assured by Washington Allston and other competent critics that the young man had decided talent, made many sacrifices of the heart and the purse to enable him to pursue the study of his art in Europe.

Morse in 1811 was twenty years old, of a frank, amiable disposition, making friends wherever he went, some of whom he kept until death severed the bond. He was impulsive, strong in his likes and dislikes, but withal remarkably self-controlled, having been reared in the stern Puritan school of Congregationalism, of which his father was a militant clergyman. In reading over the letters of the parents to the children of that time there is much that seems formal and even harsh to us of the twentieth century, but they reared giants in those days, and filial piety, reverence, and courtesy were the rule and not the exception, and self-control was insisted on as the first essential to success.

The years from 1811 to 1815, which young Morse spent in London, were years of great unrest in the political world. On the Continent the Allies were gradually checking Napoleon Bonaparte's triumphant career, the campaign culminating in Waterloo and the Treaty of Paris in 1815. In England George III was a hopeless imbecile, and the Prince Regent, afterward George IV, and his ministry, by their odious Orders in Council, were goading the young United States toward a declaration of war. There were great contrasts in England: court balls, drawing-rooms, and lavish expenditure at the top; misery, poverty, hoarse mutterings, and open revolt at the bottom. Then came the brave declaration of war by the United States, and the War of 1812, lasting till 1814.

Young Morse, while diligently pursuing his studies, took a deep interest in all these affairs, and his letters home at that time are filled with patriotic sentiments and resentment against the English government.

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He upheld the justice, the absolute necessity of the war, whereas his father and friends in America deplored it.

But it is with his artistic life that I have to deal at present.

His master was Washington Allston, twelve years older than himself, and a man of great beauty of character and of conspicuous talent as a painter.

Benjamin West, then at the zenith of his fame, also took a deep interest in his young fellow-countryman and gave him wise counsel and encouragement. Morse's friend and room-mate was Charles R. Leslie, a few years younger than himself, and afterward one of the best of the American painters of those days. Among his other intimates were Coleridge the poet, Fuseli the eccentric artist, Rogers, Charles Lamb, and others; and among the older men of note of that time, at whose houses he was always welcome, were William Wilberforce and Henry Thornton, illustrious philanthropists and members of Parliament; Zachary Macaulay, father of the historian; the two Grants, one of whom was afterward raised to the peerage as Lord Glenelg, and many others.

His letters to his parents, his brothers, and his friends during his student years in London are full of intense interest. He was a fluent writer and his style is remarkably clear. He writes to his parents on October 21, 1811:

"I mentioned in one of my other letters that I had drawn a figure (the Gladiator) to admit me into the Academy. After I had finished it I was displeased with it and concluded not to offer it but to attempt another. I have accordingly drawn another from the Laocoon statue, the most difficult of all the statues, have shown it to the keeper of the Academy, and *am admitted for a year* without the least difficulty. Mr. Allston was pleased to compliment me upon it by saying that it was better than two-thirds of the drawings of those who had been drawing at the Academy for two years."

"*May* 17th, 1812.

"Mr. West is very kind to me. I visit him occasionally of a morning to hear him converse on art. He appears quite attached to me, as he is, indeed, to all young American artists. It seems to give him the greatest pleasure to think that one day the arts will flourish in America. He says that Philadelphia will be the Athens of the world. That city certainly gives the greatest encouragement of any place in the United States. Boston is most backward, so, if ever I should return to America, Philadelphia or New York would probably be my place of abode."

In a letter to his parents of March 24, 1813, he says:

"My greatest expense next to *living* is for canvas, frames, colors, etc., and visiting galleries. The frame of my large picture, which I have just finished, cost nearly twenty pounds, besides the canvas and colors, which cost nearly eight pounds more, and the frame was the cheapest I could possibly get. Mr. Allston's frame cost him sixty guineas. Frames are very expensive things, and, on that account, I shall not attempt another large picture for some time, although Mr. West advises me to paint *large* as much as possible. The picture which I have finished is 'The Death of Hercules'; the size is eight feet by six feet and six inches. This picture I showed to Mr. West a few weeks ago and he was extremely pleased with it and paid me many high compliments. . . .

"I sent the picture to the exhibition at Somerset House, which opens on the 3d day of May, and have the satisfaction not only of having it received, but of having the praise of the council who decide on the admission of pictures. Six hundred pictures were refused admission this year, so you may suppose that a picture (of the size too of which mine is) must possess some merit to be received in preference to six hundred. A small picture may be received, even if it is not very good, because it will serve to fill up some little space which would otherwise be empty; but a large picture, from its excluding many small ones, must possess a great deal in its favor in order to be received.

"If you recollect I told you I had completed a model of a single figure of the same subject. This I sent to the Society of Arts at the Adelphi to stand for the prize which is offered every year for the best performance in painting, sculpture and architecture and is a *gold medal*. Yesterday I received the note accompanying this, by which you will see that it is adjudged to me in sculpt-

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ure this year. It will be delivered to me in public on the 13th of May or June, I don't know which, but I shall give you a particular account of the whole process as soon as I have received it."

"*June* 13, 1813.

"I send by this opportunity (Mr. Elisha Goddard) the little cast of the 'Hercules' which obtained the prize this year at the Adelphi, and also the gold medal which was the premium presented to me, before a large assembly of the nobility and gentry of the country, by the Duke of Norfolk, who also paid me a handsome compliment at the same time.

"There were present Lord Percy, the Margravine of Anspach, the Turkish, Sardinian, and Russian ambassadors, who were pointed out to me, and many noblemen whom I do not now recollect.

"My large picture also has not only been received at the Royal Academy, but has one of the finest places in the rooms. It has been spoken of in the papers, and they not only praise me but place my picture among the most attractive in the exhibition. This I know will give you pleasure."

From another source we learn that the critic of the *British Press* of May 4, 1813, placed "The Dying Hercules" among the best nine paintings in this exhibition of nearly a thousand paintings, among which were the works of Turner, Northcote, Lawrence, Wilkie, and other famous men of that period.

The critic of the *London Globe* of May 14, 1813, had this to say of this exhibition:

"Of the academicians two or three have distinguished themselves in a pre-eminent degree; besides, few have added much to their fame, perhaps they have hardly sustained it. But the great feature in this exhibition is that it presents several works of very high merit by artists with whose performances, and even with whose names, we are hitherto unacquainted. At the head of this class are Messrs. Monroe and Morse. The prize of history may be contended for by Mr. Northcote and Mr. Stothard. We should award it to the former. After these gentlemen, Messrs. Hilton, Turner, Lane, Monroe, and Morse follow in the same class."

This same critic places the "Dying Hercules" among the first twelve of the "pre-eminent works of this exhibition."

Several casts of the statuette were made, and one of them was, curiously enough, discovered by Morse many years later in the basement of the Capitol of the United States. This copy he gave to a friend, Rev. E. G. Smith, who wrote to him in 1860 for particulars concerning it. To this Morse replied:

"You ask if the cast of the 'Hercules' is the original cast or a copy. A mould was made from the original clay model from which were cast some five or six. I brought the mould with me from England, but, through ignorance of its character, a man in cleaning house supposed the parts to be broken plaster, and threw them into the street during my absence at the South, so that the original mould is destroyed.

"A copy, or rather one of the casts from the original mould, was in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, but was destroyed in the fire which consumed the Academy building.

"A mutilated fragment of another is, or was, in the National Academy collection in New York. Yours is the only perfect (as far as it is perfect) cast I know, the others having passed out of my knowledge.

"A fresh mould was made from the cast in Philadelphia many years ago by some moulders there, from which some casts (how many I do not know) were made and sold by them as *antique!* So old Paff, an eccentric picture dealer, of olden time, once told me.

"But you want to know something of its early history. This I give you in brief:

"In the year 1812 I had so far advanced in my studies as to attempt a large picture of a single figure. The subject I chose was 'The Death of Hercules.' My friend and master at that time was Washington Allston, who was then painting his picture of the 'Dead Man Restored to Life by Touching the Bones of Elisha.' He had modelled in clay the head of the 'dead man' for the purpose of aiding him in the painting, explaining to me that this was often the practice of the most celebrated old masters. From this example I determined to model the figure of the 'Hercules' to aid me in my painting of the 'Dying Hercules.'

"It was my first attempt at modelling, and, as the model, so far as it was to be of use in my picture, required only correctness and finish in one view of it, to wit, the view

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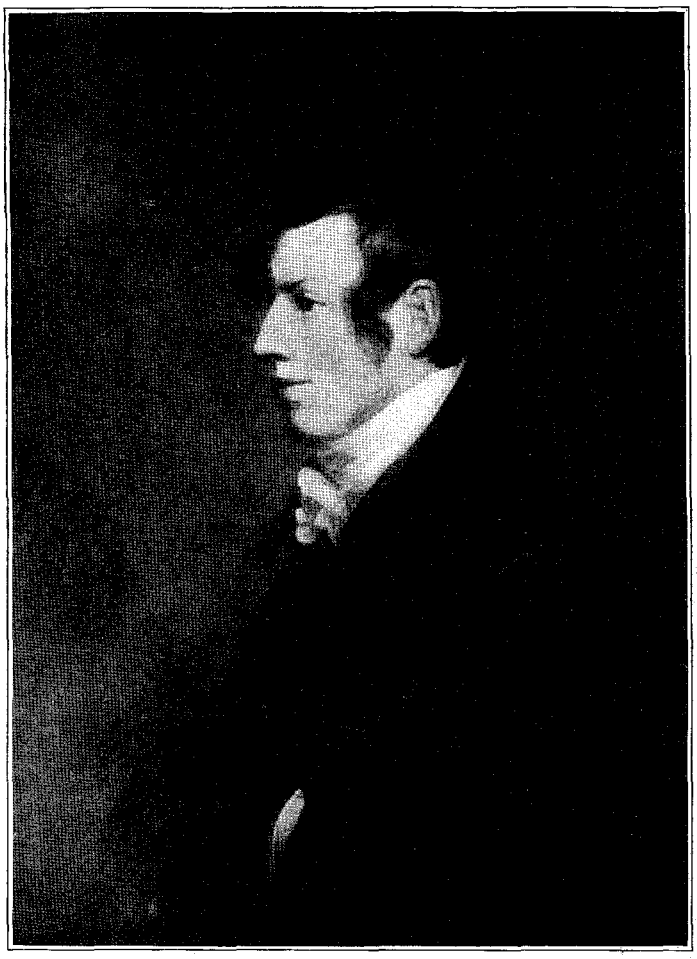

Samuel F. B. Morse.

From a painting by himself in 1814.
Property of his daughter, Mrs. Franz Rummel.

chosen for the painting, I at first completed it in that view.

"At this point Mr. Allston expressed himself so pleased with it that he advised me to finish it in every view; in other words, to make a complete statue, alleging among other reasons that I should thus become familiar with the human figure more readily than in any other way. Hence I completed the whole figure, and, on showing it to Mr. West, was much flattered by his praise of it.

"I was advised by friends that a premium of a gold medal was offered for just such an original model, and was recommended to send it to the Adelphi Society of Arts to compete for this prize. I accordingly sent it to the rooms of the society, and, to my surprise, a few days after received the summons to appear on a certain day at the rooms of the society in full meeting to receive the gold medal from the president, the Duke of Norfolk.

"This was during the War of 1812, and I have often spoken of it as a pleasing incident that, while a fierce strife was going on without between the two nations as nations, yet, in the Department of Fine Arts at least, there was a neutral peaceful ground on which artists and their encouragers could stand and be in perfect harmony with each other."

Despite the success, the artistic success, which the painting gained, it was never sold, but remains in the possession of the family to the present day, and was loaned to the Yale School of the Fine Arts, many years ago.

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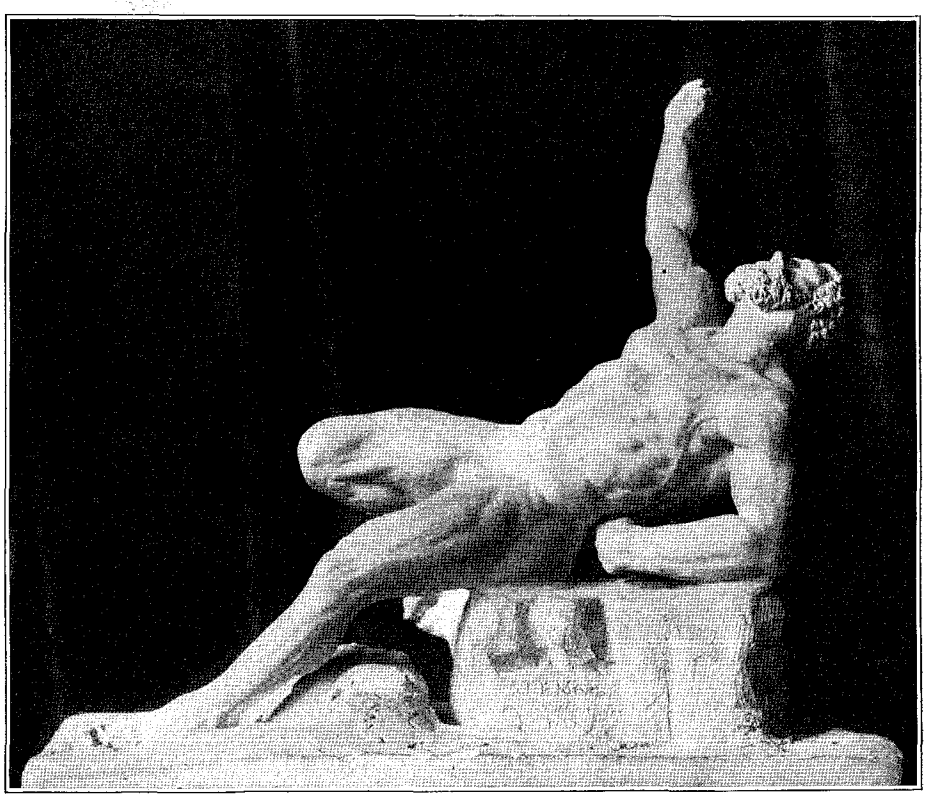
The plaster cast was presented to the Yale School by the Rev. E. G. Smith and the gold medal was given by Morse to the same school.

Morse did not wish to remain a mere portrait painter. He had a curious contempt for that branch of art, which is yet considered by many competent critics to be one

calculated than another to give in pictures the spirit of the difficult times from 1830 to 1860.

"He was a man sound in mind and body, well born, well educated, and both by birth and education in sympathy with his time. He had been abroad, had seen good work and received sound training.



Cast of the Dying Hercules. By Samuel F. B. Morse, 1812.

The original model received the Adelphi gold medal in 1813. Presented to the School of the Fine Arts, Yale.

of the most difficult of all, and real success in which raises a painter to the highest rank. Had he never achieved fame as an inventor, he would still have been known to posterity as one of the very good artists of his age, and it would have been his portraits which rescued his name from oblivion.

Samuel Isham, in his excellent "History of American Painting," after giving a short but interesting sketch of Morse's career as an artist, and saying that from the date of the first conception of the telegraph (1832) "painting ceased to be foremost in his thoughts," thus sums up:

"It was a serious loss, for Morse, without being a genius, was yet, perhaps, better

His ideals were not too far ahead of his public. Working as he did under widely varying conditions, his paintings are dissimilar, not only in merit, but in method of execution; even his portraits vary from thin, free handling to solid impasto. Yet in the best of them there is a real painter's feeling for his material; the heads have a soundness of construction and a freshness in the carnations that recall Raeburn rather than West; the poses are graceful or interesting, the costumes are skilfully arranged, and, in addition, he understands perfectly the character of his sitters, the men and women of the transition period, shrewd, capable, but rather commonplace, without

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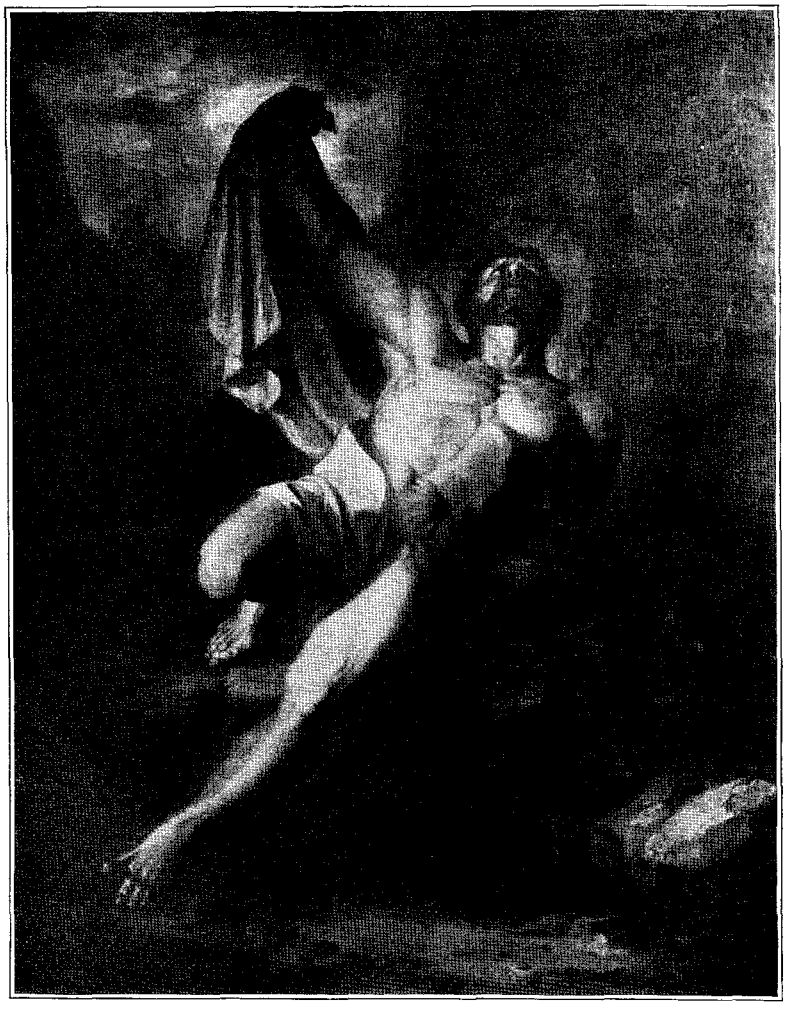

The Death of Hercules. — 1813. From a painting by Samuel F. B. Morse
Property of the family—loaned to the School of the Fine Arts, Yale.

the ponderous dignity of Copley's subjects or the cosmopolitan graces of a later day."

And yet Morse speaks thus slightingly of portrait-painting in a letter to his parents dated May 2, 1814:

"If I find that I cannot support myself, that I am contracting debts which I have no prospect of paying, I shall then return home and settle down into a mere portrait-painter for some time, till I can return to Europe again; for I cannot be happy unless I am pursuing the intellectual branch of the art. Portraits have none of it, landscape has some of it, but history has it wholly.

"I am certain you would not be satisfied to see me sit down quietly spending my time in painting portraits, throwing away the talents which Heaven has given me for the higher branches of art, and devoting my time only to the inferior. . . .

"The Americans at present stand unrivalled, and it is my great ambition (and it is certainly a commendable one) to stand among the first. My country has the most prominent place in my thoughts. How shall I raise her name, how can I be of service in refuting the calumny, so industriously spread against her, that she has produced no men of genius?"

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And again in a letter of May 3, 1815, he says:

"I do not speak of *portrait-painters;* had I no higher thoughts than being a first-rate portrait-painter, I would have chosen a far different profession.

"My ambition is to be among those who shall revive the glories of the fifteenth century; to rival the genius of a Raphael, a Michael Angelo, or a Titian. My ambition is to be enlisted in the constellation of genius which is now rising in this country. I wish to shine, not by a light borrowed from them, but to strive to shine the brightest."

Unfortunately, there was no demand in the United States of that time for great pictures such as the enthusiastic young painter felt himself capable of creating.

President Monroe.

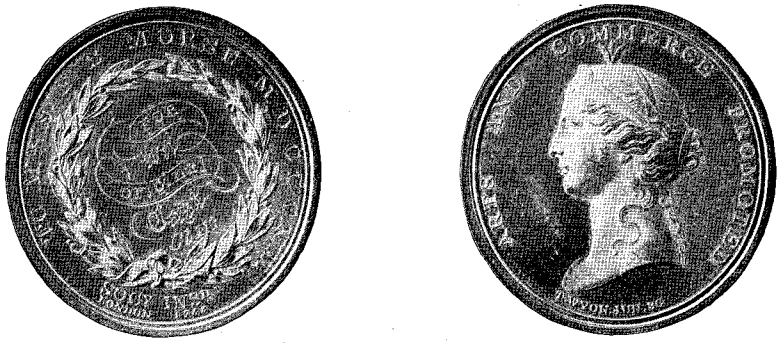
From a painting by Samuel F. B. Morse, in the City Hall, Charleston, S. C.

He returned home in the fall of 1815 hoping to stay but a year, to earn enough in that time to enable him to return to Europe and continue his studies; but even the painter of portraits was poorly paid in those days, and he did not return until fourteen years later.

How modestly remunerated were the immortalizers of the worthies of that period may be gathered from the following lines in a letter to his parents, written from Concord, N. H., on August 16, 1816:

"I am still here, and am passing my time very agreeably. I have painted five portraits at fifteen dollars each, and have two more engaged and many more talked of. I think I shall get along well. I believe I could make an independent fortune in a few years if I devoted myself exclusively to portraits, so great is the desire for good portraits in the different country towns."

He painted the good people of New Hampshire on this trip, not only in Concord, but in Walpole, Hanover, Windsor, and Portsmouth, and many of these portraits must still be in the possession of the descendants of the originals. In 1818, after his marriage to Miss Walker, of Concord, N. H., he went to Charleston, S. C., at the urgent request of his kinsman, Dr. Finley, and, while there, he painted many of the prominent people of the day.



The Adelphi gold medal, presented to Samuel F. B. Morse in 1813 for the best original cast of a single figure.

Presented to the School of the Fine Arts, Yale.

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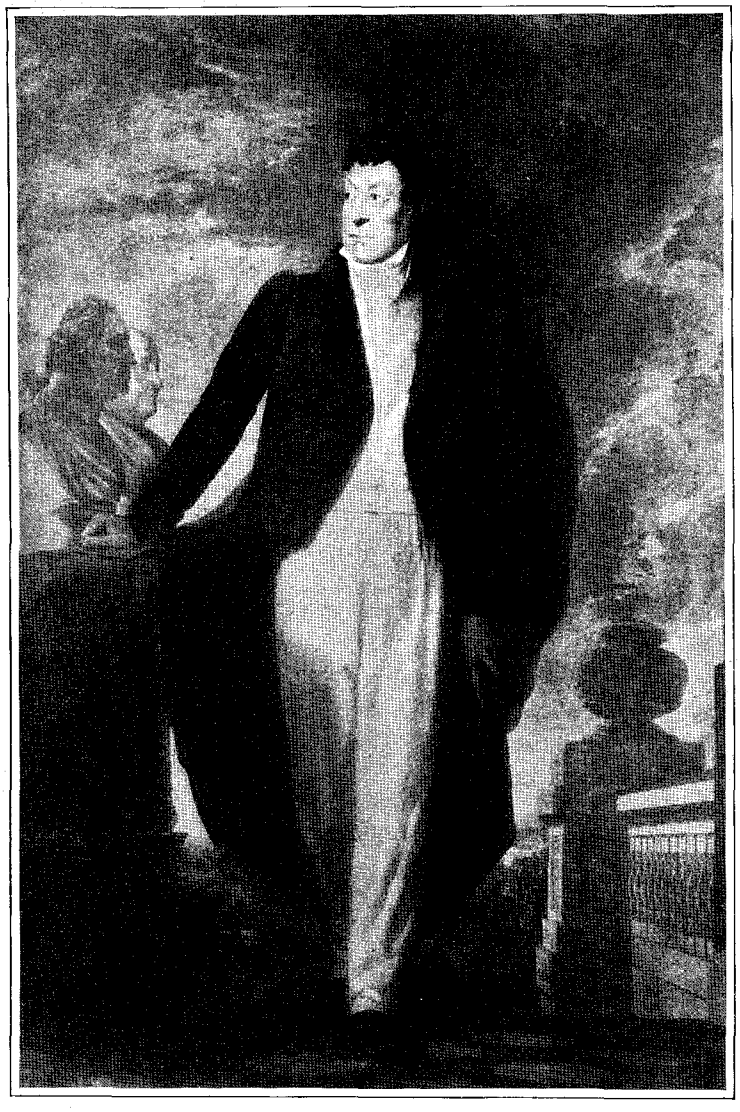
The Common Council of Charleston commissioned him to paint the portrait of James Monroe, the President, and this commission he executed in the course of the following year. Referring to it in a letter to his wife he says:

"I began on Monday to paint the President, and have almost completed the head. I am thus far pleased with it, but I find it very perplexing, for he cannot sit more than ten or twenty minutes at a time, so that the moment I feel engaged, he is called away again. I set my palette to-day at ten o'clock and waited until four o'clock this afternoon before he came in. He then sat ten minutes and we were called to dinner. Is not this trying to one's patience?

"My room is at his house, next to his cabinet room, for his convenience. When he has a moment's leisure he comes in to sit to me. He is very agreeable and affable, as are also his family. I drank tea with



Lafayette.

From the painting by Samuel F. B. Morse, 1825, in the Mayor's Reception Room, City Hall, N. Y.

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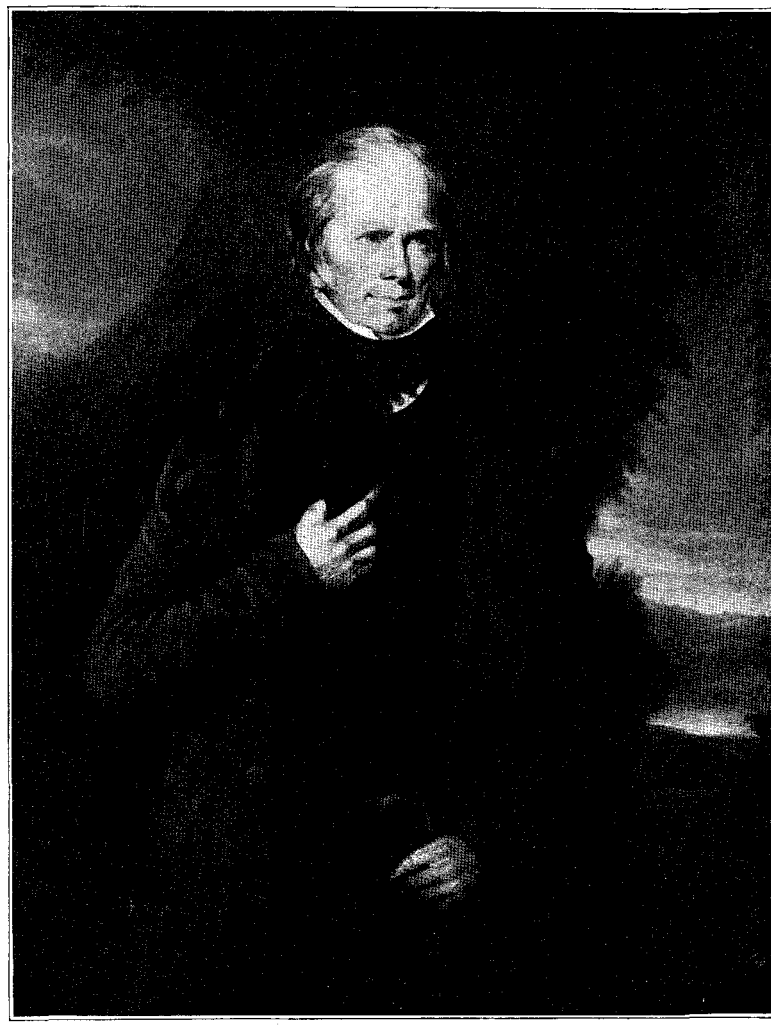

Henry Clay.

From the painting by Samuel F. B. Morse.
Property of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

them on Saturday, and dined with them on Monday and to-day."

This portrait was hung in the City Hall of Charleston, where, I believe, it still remains. The family were so pleased with it that they ordered a copy for themselves.

It would be impossible in an article of this length to follow Morse in all his wanderings in search of work. He was ever active, ever optimistic in spite of countless discouragements, always hopeful that the day would come when he need not depend on portrait-painting for his livelihood, when he would have the chance to paint the monumental works which his soul craved.

While in Charleston, in 1821, he was one of the founders of the South Carolina Academy of the Fine Arts. In New York, in 1826, he was one of the prime movers in the revolt against the old American Academy of Fine Arts, of which Trumbull was the president. The outcome of this revolt was the successful launching of the National Academy of Design, and Morse was the first president, and was annually re-elected to that office until 1845, when he refused re-election, feeling that he could not devote the necessary time to its duties, for the telegraph had then become a success. In 1861 he was again prevailed upon to accept the presidency for a year.

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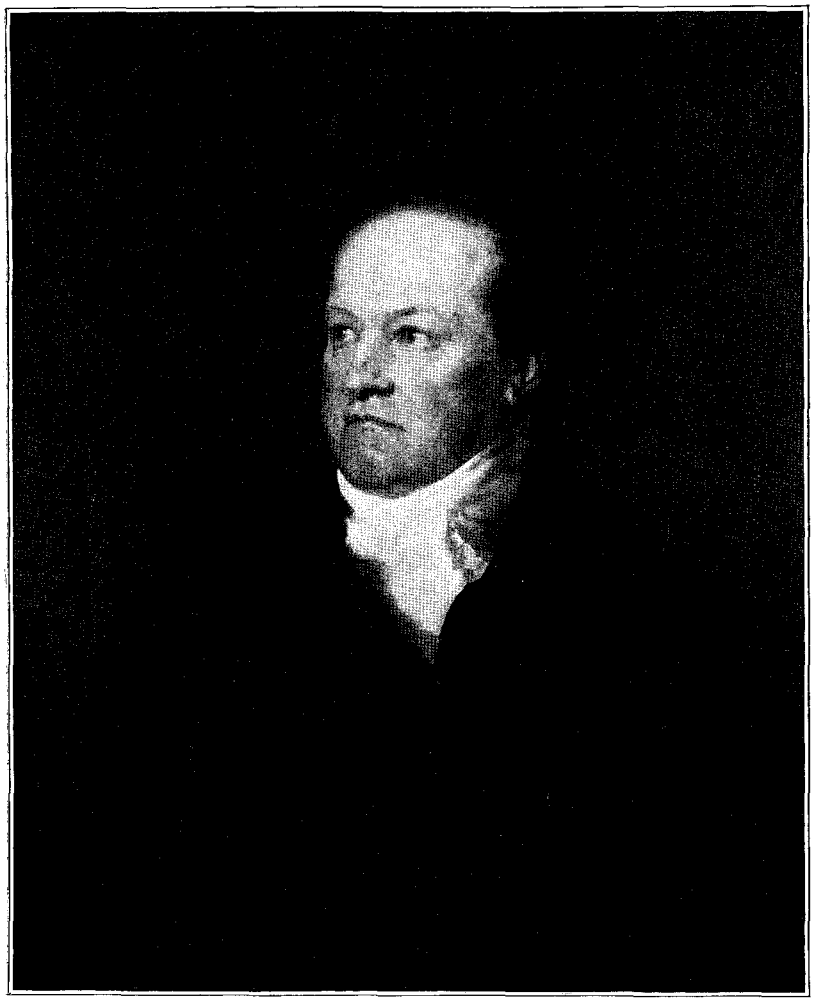

Governor De Witt Clinton.

From a painting by Samuel F. B. Morse.
Property of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Among the famous men portrayed by him were General Lafayette, Henry Clay, Chancellor Kent, William Cullen Bryant, Fitz-Greene Halleck, Thorwaldsen, Major-General Stark, and Jeremiah Evarts, the father of William M. Evarts.

Of Chancellor Kent, Morse says:

"He is not a good sitter; he scarcely presents the same view twice. He is very impatient, and you well know that I cannot paint an impatient person. I must have my mind at ease or I cannot paint."

While he was painting the portrait of General Lafayette in Washington, in 1825, he received the news of the sudden death of his dearly loved wife. He sent a message to Lafayette saying that it would be impossible for him to go on with the work at present, and received the following note of sympathy:

"I have feared to intrude upon you, my dear sir, but want to tell you how deeply I sympathize in your grief—a grief of which nobody can better than me appreciate the cruel feelings.

"You will hear from me, as soon as I find myself again near you, to finish the work you have so well begun. Accept my affectionate and mournful sentiment.

"LAFAYETTE.

"*February* 11, 1825."

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This portrait was finished later on, and now hangs in the City Hall in New York. Morse thus writes of it, many years later, in answer to a letter of inquiry from a gentleman in Boston:

Jeremiah Evarts.

From the painting by Samuel F. B. Morse.
The property of Mr. Sherman Evarts.

"POUGHKEEPSIE, *June* 11, 1858.

"MY DEAR SIR: In answer to yours of the 8th instant, just received, I can only say it is so long since I have seen the portrait I painted of General Lafayette for the city of New York, that, strange to say, I find it difficult to recall even its general characteristics.

"That portrait has a melancholy interest for me, for it was just as I had commenced the second sitting of the General at Washington, that I received the stunning intelligence of Mrs. Morse's death, and was compelled abruptly to suspend the work.

"I preserve, as a gratifying memorial, the letter of condolence and sympathy sent in to me at the moment by the General, and in which he speaks in flattering terms of the promise of the portrait as a likeness.

"I must be frank, however, in my judgment of my own works of that day. This portrait was begun under the sad auspices to which I have alluded, and, up to the close of the work, I had a series of

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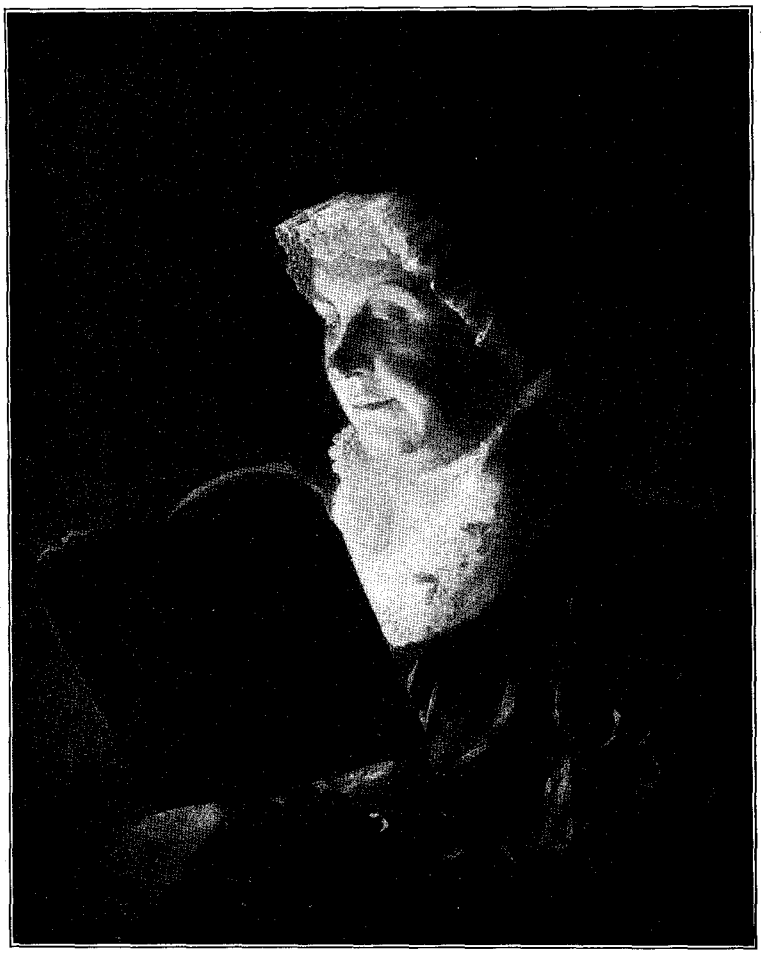
constant interruptions of the same sad character.

"A picture painted under such circumstances can scarcely be expected to do the artist justice, and, as a work of art, I cannot praise it.

"Still it is a good likeness, was very satisfactory to the General, and he several times alluded to it in my presence in after years, when I was a frequent visitor to him in Paris, in terms of praise.

"It is a full-length standing figure, the size of life. He is represented as standing at the top of a flight of steps, which he has just ascended, upon a terrace, the figure coming against a glowing sunset, indicative of the glory of his own evening of life. Upon his right, if I remember, are three pedestals, one of which is vacant, as if waiting for his bust, while the two others are surmounted by the busts of Washington and Franklin—the two associated, eminent historical characters of his own time. In a vase on the other side is a flower—the helianthus—with its face toward the sun, in allusion to the characteristic stern, uncompromising consistency of Lafayette—a trait of character which I then considered, and still consider, the great prominent trait of that distinguished man."



Elizabeth A. Morse.

From a painting by her son, Samuel F. B. Morse.
Owned by a member of the family.

About the year 1822, Morse painted the

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Portrait of his first wife and two children.
From a painting by Samuel F. B. Morse.

large picture of the House of Representatives (now Statuary Hall) which, at present, hangs in the Corcoran Gallery, in Washington.

It was more in line with the monumental work which it was his ambition to produce; it contains over eighty portraits of the legislators of that day, but the key has, unfortunately, been lost. Although it is excellent as a work of art and is much admired by the painters of the present day, it attracted but little attention at the time and proved a pecuniary loss to the painter. The times were not yet ripe for works of that character. It was not until about ten years later, after Morse had again visited Europe and had perfected himself still further in his art, that his great opportunity came.

The selection of artists to paint the great historical pictures for the panels in the rotunda of the Capitol, at Washington, was referred to the committee in Congress of which John Quincy Adams, ex-President and member of Congress, was a member, and Morse, strongly endorsed by Washington Allston and the National Academy of Design, confidently expected to be chosen to paint at least one or two of these pictures.

Mr. Adams wished to throw the competition open to the artists of all countries,

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Susan Walker Morse.
From a painting by Samuel F. B. Morse.

saying that there were no American artists of sufficient ability to paint such great pictures. A caustic reply to Mr. Adams's assertions appeared anonymously in the New York *Evening Post*, and was attributed by him to the facile pen of Morse. The real author proved to be James Fenimore Cooper, but this became known too late, for Morse's name was rejected by the committee.

He never really recovered from this terrible blow to his artistic ambition; he could never speak of it in later years unmoved; it practically ended his career as an artist.

Thus do the fates weave our destinies; what seem to be calamities are often blessings in disguise. Morse, the artist, dropped his discouraged brush and threw himself with all the ardor of his sanguine nature into the perfection of what was then looked upon as the idle dream of a madman; he struggled on through years of hardship and privation, and gave to the world the electric telegraph.

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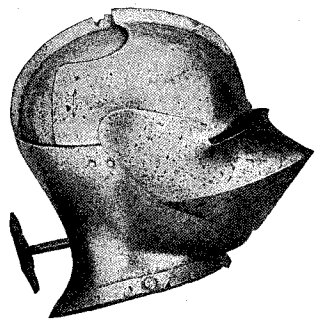
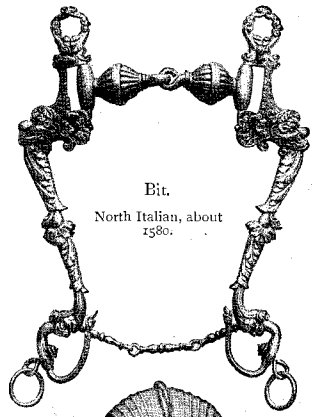


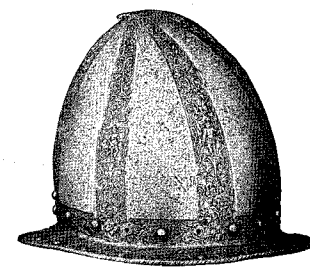
Closed casque.

Italian, about 1480.



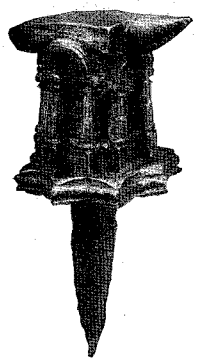
Bit.

North Italian, about 1580.



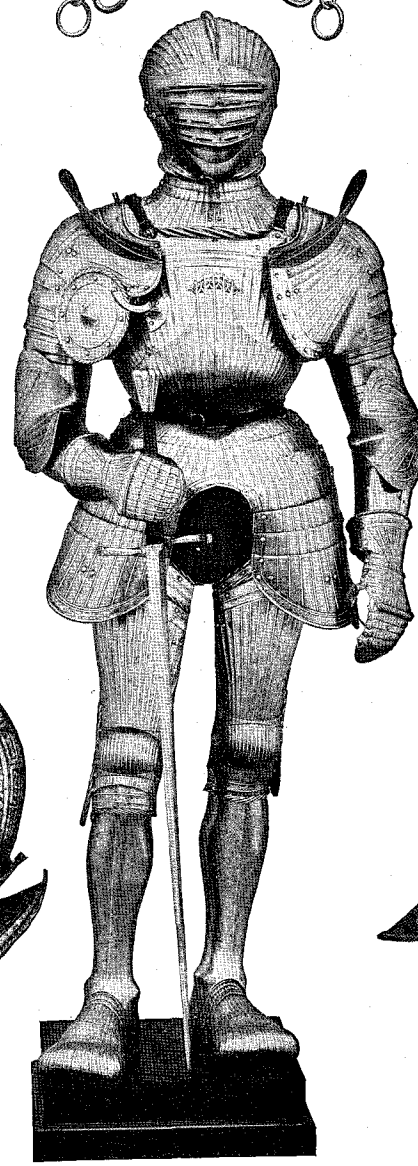
Cabasset.

Decorated with bands, chiselled and gilded, about 1600.



Armorer's anvil.

Sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

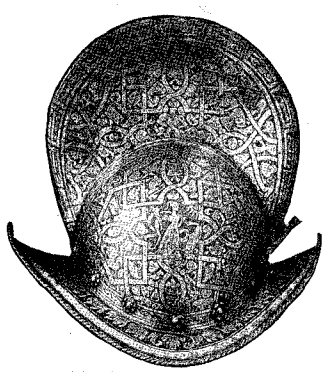


Maximilian armor.

About 1510.

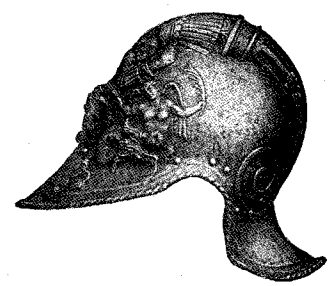
Vise.

North Italian, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.



Morion, with high comb.

Italian, about 1580.



Burganet.

Workmanship of Milanese Negroli, about 1540.

—See "The Field of Art," page 381.

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THE TURNSTILE

BY A. E. W. MASON

XXI

MR. BENOLIEL'S WARNING

MR. BENOLIEL, however, persisted.

"I daren't be silent, Cynthia. There are just three great crises—some would say three great catastrophes—birth, marriage, and death. The first and the last happen. They are outside our control. But about the middle one we do ourselves have a word to say; we can direct it. And it's the most important of them all. For it means the beginning of life for others, and the making or undoing of our own. Therefore you can't afford to trust to luck, Cynthia."

"I am not trusting to luck at all," said Cynthia confidently.

"Aren't you?" asked Mr. Benoliel. "Just think for a moment. When I said that youth should marry youth, I was going a little deeper than the mere physical fitness of such a marriage, though that too has its importance. But Captain Rames is forty, and you, Cynthia, are twenty-two. What does that mean? Let me answer for you. It means that you are proposing to marry a man, nineteen years of whose life—whose man's life—if you understand me, you have had no share in, no influence upon, and have now no real knowledge of. I am not suggesting that the conventional other woman is somewhere in the background, waiting to appear at the marriage ceremony with a baby in her arms," he continued with a smile. "But during those nineteen years how many things must have happened to him, trials and miseries and elations, to modify and mould his character? And since you are ignorant of the things which happened to him, how can you know the man?"

"Yet I think I do know him," said Cynthia, and her confidence increased. She could meet Mr. Benoliel on this battle-ground. "And without laying claim to any particular insight. For he has always been careful that I should know him. From the very first day of our acquaintanceship he has spoken and acted quite deliberately in order that I might have no illusions about him. He has wanted me to know him just as clearly as he knows himself."

Mr. Benoliel shrugged his shoulders.

"Does he know himself?" he asked.

"Better than most men," said Cynthia. "He has set out to use himself as a machine—I don't think that I can explain him in a better way—and he has studied the machine unceasingly, its limits and its capacities, so that he might use it to its fullest power." She recalled Harry Rames's foresight, the careful laying of his plans, the queer modesty which underlay his ambition to excel. She turned triumphantly to Mr. Benoliel. "Oh, yes, he knows himself a good deal better than youth can know itself."

"Ah!" said Mr. Benoliel, raising a warning finger. "I was waiting for that. I admit that youth doesn't know itself. But then it's not so important that it should. There's not, after all, as yet, so very much to know. But take it this way. Suppose that you and Captain Rames were both young and of an age! Suppose that he had the nineteen years which separate you in front of him instead of behind him!"

"Well?" said Cynthia.

"Why, then, when he reached forty, you, the wife, would know him better than he would know himself. A wife always does, if she lives in sympathy with her husband. I am presuming that. You would know him a good deal better than he knows himself now. The solitary nineteen years of which now I dread the consequences, you would have shared. That's the point. And you wouldn't be running the danger you are running now."

"What danger?" asked Cynthia impatiently. "Of what are you afraid?"

"I am afraid of the latent things," Mr. Benoliel answered. "I am afraid of the seeds which may have been sown in him

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during these nineteen years, and of which the plant has not yet shown. I am afraid of latent desires, fancies, ambitions, latent cravings of which he is not yet aware, and which may some day come to life with overwhelming strength. Haven't you seen men suddenly change for no apparent reason to the ordinary observer, drop from all their established habits, begin again upon another plane? I have, and that's the change I am afraid of now. For it's one you would be powerless to avert, since you would not even suspect it until it actually happened."

He turned toward Cynthia, and with a smile upon his face summed up his argument.

"Make no mistake, Cynthia. I am not making light of Captain Rames. In a way my fears are an actual tribute to the man. But I am afraid that out of a life so busy, and so keen as his has been, so fraught with incidents, so varied, something may suddenly seize him and catch him back, and hold him; some craving, some ambition in which you will have no share, and which will separate you forever."

He spoke with so much earnestness that Cynthia was impressed against her will. She was sure that he was speaking with knowledge of a kindred case. Certain words he had dropped made her certain that the kindred case was his own.

"But supposing that such a change came," she said with hesitation, "must it separate?"

"No," said Mr. Benoliel gently, "not if both bring to the marriage love. Then I don't think it need." He glanced at her swiftly, and said with a sudden sharp note in his voice: "But what if the marriage be only a bargain, Cynthia? What then?" and the blood rushed into the girl's face as he looked at her.

"I'll tell you," he cried. His voice rose and a kind of sombre passion rang in it. "One party doesn't keep the bargain, or keeps it half-heartedly, as an irksome thing, and day by day the separation grows more complete, until you are living with your enemy or living quite alone."

His voice dropped again to a whisper on the last words. He finished and sat lost wistfully in his own recollections, and forgetful of Cynthia at his side. After a little while his lips moved, and, as an old man will, he spoke a word or two to himself. Cynthia's ears caught the words.

"It was my fault, and it couldn't be helped," he said, and so again fell into a long silence, with his eyes upon the coals of the fire. At length Cynthia touched him gently upon the sleeve.

"I should like—the instance," she said timidly.

Isaac Benoliel roused himself with a start.

"Yes. I mean to give it you."

"But I have no right to it," Cynthia insisted. "You must remember that."

Benoliel shook his head and smiled.

"You are a young girl starting out on life. You have every right to it, Cynthia."

"I mean that it cannot change me," she said. "I would like to hear it—yes. But it is only that I may understand and be ready. And if you think that reason insufficient, don't tell me. I shall thank you, all the same, for offering to tell me."

"You mustn't take the warning literally," he said. "I am of the East, you know. So is my story"; and a sudden relief swept over Cynthia. He was not of her people, his stand-point would not be hers, his warning might not apply to her. She thought of Sir James Burrell's words. Discouragement sat more lightly upon her than it had done during the last hour. There were certain curious phases in Mr. Benoliel's life which were not understood—sudden disappearances, for instance, during which no one met him to bring back to London the place of his abode. He was recognized as a man apart. Yes, he was of the Orient, and he might have no message for her ears.

"It was my race which caught me back," Benoliel began, and Cynthia's courage increased. But his story was only just begun.

XXII

AND AN INSTANCE TO ENFORCE IT

"You knew, I suppose, that I was married?"

"Yes," said Cynthia.

"And that my wife lives?"

"Yes."

Mr. Benoliel nodded and shifted in his chair.

"You have also very possibly heard a good many speculations about my origin?"

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"A good many," said Cynthia.

"Well, here's the truth. I am a Barbary Jew. I come out of Morocco, the one country where you'll find the East to-day. Already in Tangier, the city given over to the foreigner, you will come across some traces of it. But ride for a few hours out of Tangier, straight to the South, pay your dues and cross the Red Hill, and you'll have both feet planted in the East, and may breathe in some of its enchantment. Go forward for another day or so, and you may pass perhaps some tall Arab, striding through the crowd outside El Ksar, carrying a stick stretched across his shoulder-blades. He'll speak to no one, stop for nothing, and all will make way for him. That's the Imperial Courier, on his way to the coast from Fez. He'll not sleep upon the way, and he'll take no food lest he should sleep. He'll be in Tangier three days after he has left Fez. He's the penny post. Ride on still further, cross the Sebou, travel over a vast plain by a track beaten by the feet of men and animals, yet strangely enough a track which never runs straight, though the plain is bare, but winds and turns, and winds again over the face of the country." Mr. Benoliel's eyes were fixed upon the fire; he spoke, lingering upon his words. He had grown forgetful of the purpose which drove him to reveal himself. Another and a strange aspect of him was presented suddenly to Cynthia. The dilettante and the exquisite had vanished. He spoke with a kind of yearning in his voice. His thoughts had drifted out through the doorway of his abominable villa. He was walking in the starshine over the wide empty plain of the Sebou, steeped in the enchantment of which he had spoken. Dimly she foresaw whither he was leading her.

"Yet a day and you come to a wall of hills. Right ahead of you a cleft opens—that's the pass to Fez—a troublesome place, by the way, for Barbary Jews, since the Z'mur tribe has a way of taking toll in that narrow pass," Benoliel explained with a smile, and seemed to become once more aware of Cynthia's presence.

"But a little further to the right from a break in the sky-line of the wall, a regular broad staircase seems to descend. It becomes a track, it zigzags across the face of the cliff, like a piece of string, to the plain. That's the road to my home," and he suddenly threw back his head and sat alert—"the city of Mequinez—the most eastern of the cities of the East, where the great gateway of mosaic, built by Christian captives, crumbles slowly to ruin, and the Jew must not wear shoes in the street, must walk barefoot with a black gaberdine upon his body, and a black cap upon his head. I ought to resent that, eh, Cynthia?"

He looked at her, and answered the question himself. "But I was born there," and to him the answer was sufficient.

"In Mequinez!" said Cynthia, striving to bridge the distance between this actual house in the green of Warwickshire and that distant city with the great mosaic gate in Barbary. Mr. Benoliel helped her a little to see it.

"Yes, in the Mellah of Mequinez, Cynthia. That's where the Jews are crowded; an evil-smelling place you would call it, close and airless, with narrow alleys and houses huddling together, and a reek of rancid cookery. Yet it's a town of spaces; there's a good square before the gate. There are great silent palaces, with gardens and lakes. There's room in Mequinez—but not for us. We were shut up in the Mellah at six o'clock at night like children. And we were not all poor. The Mellah was gaudy with the bright handkerchiefs and dresses of the women, and their satin and silk scarves. There was a great deal of money in the Mellah of Mequinez, and a great deal more owed to it by its Moorish lords and masters in the city. But that didn't make any difference. Remember, you are in the East in Mequinez, and a Moor who owed me a thousand pounds would make me strip off my shoes in the street, if he met me wearing them. A pretty picture of dignity, eh, Cynthia?"

Cynthia did not answer. She was puzzled by Benoliel now, and she did not wish to interrupt him. He sat beside her, neat and trim and scrupulously clothed, with no jewellery but a pearl stud in his shirt-front, and pearl links at his cuffs, a person utterly modern and used to good manners. Yet he spoke of the Mellah in Mequinez not with the air of one recollecting unclean days, now, thank God, altogether done with, but rather with a kind of relish and contentment that such places should be. She had to cast an eye about that flamboyant hall before she could in any way reconcile Mr. Benoliel with his words.

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"I was not one of the rich, however," he continued. "I was a poor boy. I lived with an aunt, for both my parents were dead, and picked up a few copper flouss from time to time as I could. My aunt wasn't very kind. I was terrified of the Moors and their dark, contemptuous faces. There's a wall outside Mequinez, one of many which run out into the country and stop—but this one runs further than the rest. It was built or rather begun—for, like all things in Morocco, it was never finished—by some old king, so that a blind man might be able to find his way from Mequinez to Morocco City without a guide. I was always fascinated by that wall, and wanted to follow it—and never to come back. I hated Mequinez. Finally I ran away one morning with a pedlar of my race who wanted a boy to help him. He and I and a donkey, which carried his stock in trade, slipped out early from the town, and climbed northward onto a great rolling plateau of grass and asphodel, which reached away past the white sacred city of Mulai Idris, on the hill of Jebel Zarhon, past the Roman ruins of Volubilis, to that gap in the sky-line of the cliff where the road leads down to the plain of the Sebou. It was spring-time, there were irises up to our knees, the asphodel bushes were in flower, and the air on this wide upland, with Jebel Zarhon on our right hand, was sweet and clean. We walked, brushing through the bushes, our shadows shifting as the sun rose—I had a sense of freedom. We stopped and ate at a little stream, and went on again. I can remember all the details of that day, even to a great glowing field of mustard, which shone like yellow silk——"

Mr. Benoliel pulled himself up with a laugh.

"But I needn't tell you about all that," he cried. "Here's the point. At the top of a roll in the turf, just by a miserable little tent village, I sat down upon the ground, while the pedlar bargained over his wares, and I took what I meant to be my last look at Mequinez. I could see the city below me far away, and very small in the sunshine, with its buildings all confused. I made up my mind then that I would be a rich man, and that never—never would I pass between the ruined walls up to the gateway of Mequinez again, that never—never, would I look on it even from a spot so far away as this. We went over the brow of the hill, and I saw Mequinez no more. In a fortnight we came to Rabat upon the sea. There I learnt the great lesson."

He sat still for a few moments, with his chin sunk upon his chest. He seemed to be wondering whether, after all, the lesson was so great a lesson, and worth the learning.

"Yes?" asked Cynthia. "What lesson?"

"We crossed the river from Sallee to Rabat, where the great plants and cactuses hang down the walls," he explained. "It was evening. I said to the pedlar: 'We must hurry to the Mellah.' And he answered: 'In Rabat there is no Mellah.'"

"No Jews, then," said Cynthia.

Mr. Benoliel shook his head and laughed.

"That's what I thought, Cynthia. But I was wrong. There were Jews in Rabat, but they wore European clothes, they lived in houses, in the best positions—for of course they had all the money, that goes without saying, in Morocco as in most other places—they were people of importance, consuls and vice-consuls; they were allowed to walk in the governor's orange garden. I was astounded. I asked how this could be. And I got my answer between cuffs from my pedlar. It was the influence of the Europeans. Rabat is a sea-port with European trade. That was the great lesson: the Europeans do not have Mellahs."

"So you decided to come to Europe," said Cynthia.

"Not quite at once," said Mr. Benoliel shrewdly. "I was a boy and very ignorant. I had to find out first whether a Jew could make as much money in Europe as he could in Morocco."

Cynthia laughed in spite of herself; and Mr. Benoliel quite misunderstood the reason of her laughter.

"Well, I didn't know anything about Europe at all," he said seriously. "But I made inquiries. Oh, I heard stories. The Jews of Rabat talked of London, and of hotels in London. There was one who said—and it was repeated to the pedlar, who told it to me, but I would not believe it—'We kept it up all June, every night, till four o'clock in the morning, in the

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American Bar.' They were gay dogs in London, the Jews of Rabat, and they made money enough to keep it up all night till four o'clock in the morning, in the American Bar. So I decided to come to London."

All Mr. Benoliel's humor had deserted him. He was speaking with intense seriousness. He was a little Barbary boy again, learning with amazement the extraordinary latitude which Europe allowed to its Jews.

"So I ran away from the pedlar," he resumed; and now at last he smiled. "You will never guess, Cynthia, in what capacity I came to England. I came with a troupe of Moorish acrobats who were going to appear at one of the music halls in London."

"You!" Cynthia exclaimed.

"Yes. I found them on the beach at Rabat, with their baggage, waiting for the surf to go down. The Elder Dempster steamboat was lying outside the bar, a mile from the shore. They wanted a boy who was light. They took me."

"And you appeared at the music halls?" Cynthia asked.

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Benoliel, "I appeared. I learnt some simple somersaults and balancings, and I looked after the baggage. That lasted for a year. By that time I had learnt some English and I left them. I am not going to bother you with the next twenty years of my life. I got on as others have done—office-boy to confidential clerk—the usual process. I meant to make money, you see—all the time, hour by hour, I meant to make money. I was with a great firm of financiers who had got themselves into a tangle over some eastern business. I had mastered the subject; I was by my origin fitted to cope with it; and I saw a way out of the trouble. The firm came to me, and with the firm my opportunity. I asked for a salary of seventeen thousand pounds a year. The firm refused. I went on at my old two hundred and fifty for another month. By that time the trouble had grown more grave. It was a real crisis, meaning perhaps dishonor. The firm came to me again and accepted my terms. It took me a year to put matters right, and at the end of the year I was, of course, dismissed. But I had seventeen thousand pounds, and I knew what to do with it."

"You made it into a great fortune," said Cynthia.

"By the time I was forty," replied Mr. Benoliel. "And then I began to think about marrying."

Cynthia stirred and leaned forward. Benoliel turned swiftly toward her.

"Ah," he said, "you are beginning to appreciate the similarity between my case and Rames's. But it doesn't date from the age of forty at which we both began to think about marrying. No! Strip our careers of the accidents of race and country and occupation, and you will find the similarity right there in our boyhood and our youth. We were both adventurers, both determined to get on, he to his ends, I to mine. Well, at forty-one I married."

Mr. Benoliel hesitated. His wife was living. He was a man of some sensibility, and a delicate reticence of mind made it repugnant to him to lay before another the manner of his marriage and its troubles. But he looked again at Cynthia, and the freshness and the youth of her, and the trouble in her big dark-blue eyes, which were fixed so intently upon his face, persuaded him. He might be exaggerating. His fears might be quite vain. But suppose that they were not? Every line of grief graven in the girl's young face would be a whole epistle of condemnation.

"Our marriage was a bargain, too," he said frankly. "My wife brought social position, I money. But there was less risk in our bargain than there will be in yours."

"Why less risk?" asked Cynthia.

"Because we who are Jews make good husbands," said Mr. Benoliel; and Cynthia cried out indignantly:

"I am not afraid that Harry will make a bad one."

"I don't say either that he will," Mr. Benoliel returned calmly. "I only say that as a rule the Jew makes a good husband. He believes in the family. Can you say as much of the Christian? No. Therefore there *was* less risk in our bargain. And still it did not turn out well."

"Why?"

"Because I was forty-one and my wife twenty-three. Yes, that's the truth at the end of it all. There were eighteen years of experiences and struggles in my life which my wife had not shared; and out of those eighteen years there sprang a passion in me which I, least of all, expected, and which I could not combat. I became homesick for

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my country, and for that city on which I had turned my back with joy."

"You?" cried Cynthia. For a moment she thought herself listening to a fairy tale. "You wanted to go back to the humiliations, to the Mellah?"

She recalled the feminine nicety of his house in Grosvenor Square, the bright silver—not too much of it—the elegance of its mahogany furniture, which was never allowed to crowd the rooms. She recollected those dinner-parties at which the great men of the earth were entertained with so much pride. It could not be that he wished to return to the crowded Jewish quarter, noisome with the reek of rancid cookery, where the gates were locked on its inhabitants at six o'clock of the night! But Mr. Benoliel replied with an energy and a fire which she had never known him manifest before:

"Yes. I wanted to go back. How and when the longing first came to me, I can't tell you. But it did come, and, having come, it grew. I felt day by day more and more of a stranger amongst a strange people. That road winding up the cliffs to the break in the sky-line above the plain of the Sebou—I began to dream of it! Then I used to lie awake at night and travel along it, past the pillars and arches of Volubilis, and the little white city of Mulai Idris, on the shoulder of Jebel Zarhon—right over the upland, and down through the asphodel to Mequinez. Finally, I had to go. I told my wife. We had got on together up till then, no better, no worse than other people. She stared at me with amazement, with suspicion, as at a stranger, and from that moment our relations changed. She knew quite well to what I was going back, to what I wanted to go back—the Mellah, the gaberdine, and the rest of it. And—it was natural, I think—she despised me. I was quite aware of her contempt, and—was indifferent to it. I wanted to go back. And I did."

"You did?" said Cynthia. And then, "I see. I see."

She understood now those mysterious disappearances of Mr. Benoliel when he vanished from his clubs and his haunts, and no man brought news of him.

"Yes, I went, and as I went London and the years in London dropped away from me. I was happy. I went down with my mules into Mequinez, and put my European clothes away in a cupboard in the Mellah. I stayed in Mequinez three months."

"But how?" asked Cynthia. "What did you do?"

Mr. Benoliel smiled.

"Business," he said. "I traded. I lent money. Then I came back to England—refreshed as a man comes from his bath. But my wife hated the whole business. At first she would not hear a word of what I had been doing. Then she became curious—morbidly curious. There was no end to her questions. What humiliations, what indignities had fallen to me amongst the Moors—she was never tired of hearing. And as she questioned and I answered, she would sit looking at me, with eyes in which contempt grew ever more bitter, looking at me as one looks upon a stranger. Quarrels followed. I went back to Mequinez, after a year or two, and again after another period. And every time the pull of the place became stronger. It was after my third visit that our marriage came to an end. We gave a great dinner-party, and when our guests had gone, she told me that our life had become intolerable to her."

Mr. Benoliel did not spare himself. It was rather a grim scene which he had to describe—the last one of many quarrels which had sprung from their estrangement. "You leave me for those squalors. You return to me fresh from them"; that was the burden of her accusation. She was not of his race or of his people. She had no sympathy with, no comprehension of, the intense craving which from time to time assailed him to go back to his own place, or of the utter weariness which overtook him of the life of London, in which he played an actor's part. The squalor and humiliation of his days in Mequinez got upon her nerves, filled her with disgust, and made his companionship repugnant.

"You can understand that, Cynthia?" he asked, and Cynthia, since frankness was demanded of her, agreed.

"Yes, I can understand that," she answered gently. His story was to her fantastic and fabulous. It belonged to the East—as he did. Only by keeping in mind that he, underneath the veneer of his manners, was of the East could she accept it as truth. She did so accept it. But she looked at Mr. Benoliel with curious eyes,

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and was conscious of a feeling very like aversion. Within the half-hour he had grown a stranger to her even as he had done to his wife. That he should leave the order and the cleanliness of his home, depart from the company of cultured people—he the dilettante—don the gaberdine, go joyfully back to the dirt and squalor of his Mellah, humbly take off his slippers and walk barefoot at the bidding of any Moor who passed him by—that Cynthia could not understand. But that his wife should find life with him intolerable when he came back from his degradation, refreshed as by a bath, to resume existence at her side—that she did thoroughly understand.

"So we separated," said Mr. Benoliel.

"Yes," said Cynthia. "But there's no parallel between your case and ours. What happened to you cannot happen to us."

She was not sure. There was appeal in her voice. She pleaded to him to agree with her. She clung desperately to her one small piece of knowledge. Mr. Benoliel was of the East. Harry Rames was not.

"There is a parallel, and a close one," Mr. Benoliel insisted. "What happened to us may happen to you. Out of the experiences of eighteen years in Captain Rames's life, experiences in which you have no share, some unsuspected craving may even now be fermenting which may turn the course of his thoughts, and snatch him back from you."

"He would fight against it," said Cynthia.

"Even so, it would stand between you, and it would grow."

Cynthia was silent for a moment. Then she said timidly:

"Even then there is one condition according to you which would avert the risk."

"Yes, one. Love."

And again Cynthia was silent. Then she burst out, striking her hands together in a violence of revolt:

"But I know him! I know him!" and with the words still in her ears, she doubted them. Mr. Benoliel's warning had alarmed her. But it had alarmed her chiefly because it had brought home to her how very little she might really know of those whom she met daily, and with whom she was most intimate. Here was Mr. Benoliel. She had thought she knew him, and so well that she could play with him, and twist him to her wishes. He had spoken for half an hour, and, lo! she had never known him.

"Do all men hide themselves?" she cried. "Do you all build up barriers about you, and lie hidden within? Oh, but Harry's honest—honest"; and again she caught at her old argument and consolation.

She rose from her seat abruptly.

"Thank you very much for all you have said. I am grateful. I shall not forget it. Good-night"; and she moved away to the foot of the stairs. She stopped then and turned back, as though in half a mind to say more. But as Mr. Benoliel rose, and she looked at him, a shadow darkened her eyes and she seemed to shrink from him with that slight sense of repulsion.

"Good-night," she said again, and hurriedly went up the stairs. His story was too new in her thoughts. What she had it in her mind to say, she left untold.

But Mr. Benoliel was none the less to be informed of it that night. He sat late in the hall after the lights had been turned out, with only the firelight flickering on the hearth. He had read the aversion in Cynthia's face which his story had provoked. He had made a sacrifice of her affection. But he had made it for her sake, and he did not regret that he had spoken. None the less he was disturbed. He might have done no good, and he had reopened an old wound of his own. He sat there knowing that if he went to bed he would not sleep; and in a little while he heard a noise in the corridor leading to the billiard-room. The door into the hall was softly opened, and the wavering light of a candle dimly lit up that cavernous place. The screen stood between Benoliel and the intruder. He could see nothing but the light of the candle shaking upon the walls above the screen. He did not move, he heard some one moving across the floor of the hall; he kept his eyes fixed upon the opening between the screens; and he saw Captain Rames pass across the opening. He sprang up with a low cry. Rames was coming from the corridor where his bedroom was to the foot of the stairs up which Cynthia had gone. At the cry Rames stopped, and, holding the candle above his head, peered into the shadows. Mr. Benoliel came quickly toward him.

"Where are you going, Captain Rames?" he asked.

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"To my wife," said Harry.

Mr. Benoliel stared at Harry Rames.

"You and Cynthia are married?"

"Yes."

"When are you going to make your marriage public?"

"On the day the Whitsuntide holidays begin. We shall have it announced in the evening papers. We shall already have left for Fontainebleau."

So after all Mr. Benoliel had spoken in vain. He might have spared his breath, and retained in a fuller degree Cynthia's liking and respect. He knew now what she had turned back from the stairs to tell him.

"Give her this message," he said. "Tell her to forget what I have said to her"; and he moved away.

But the message was of no use. He had said what he had to say, and Cynthia could not forget. She watched. She was afraid; as since her seventeenth birthday she had always been afraid.

XXIII

CYNTHIA ON THE HOUSE

On the morning after Parliament had risen the newspapers announced the marriage of Cynthia Daventry to Harry Rames. The ceremony had taken place by special license early one morning at a little church in Mayfair, with a girl friend of Cynthia's, and a member of Parliament named Robert Brook, as witnesses. A good many people were surprised; still more, however, declared that they had foreseen the marriage all along, and that of course it couldn't last; while Lord Helmsdale's mother simply remarked in accents of pity: "Poor thing! Double her age, isn't he? And she was so pretty, too, a few months ago."

On the other hand, however, a good many honest telegrams of congratulations reached the couple honeymooning in the woods of Fontainebleau; and when Harry and Cynthia returned to London, there were fresher incidents than their marriage for people to discuss. They settled down in Curzon Street to keep their bargain loyally.

If Cynthia's heart ached at times, as it had done amongst the trees of Fontainebleau, for a life struck to fire by passion, she gave no outward sign of her pain. She was to help forward the great career, and to the best of her powers she did. She threw open her house to her husband's party; she entertained; she attended social gatherings; she walked abroad in Ludsey with a good memory for faces; she spent many hours in the train. Harry on his side, was assiduous at Westminster. He sat upon committees in the morning, and on one of the green benches below the gangway during the afternoon and evening, with an occasional rush home at a quarter to eight to take his wife out to dinner.

"Be there!" was one of Henry Smale's maxims which he had taken to heart. "Sit in the House. Never mind the library or the smoking-room, or the lobby, or the terrace. Sit in the House! However dull the debate, and however inviting the sunlight streaming through the high windows, sit in the House. All the great Parliamentarians have done it. The lawyers can't do it, of course. But you haven't their excuse. You can. It may seem waste of time. You'll find that it isn't."

So Harry Rames sat in the House, and Cynthia, when she had no other engagement to detain her, came down to Westminster, dined with him there, and spent an hour afterward in the ladies' gallery. She became acquainted with many men of different calibre, and amongst them with Mr. Devenish, the Secretary for Agriculture, who was just beginning to do a little more than make a vociferous noise in the world. Mr. Devenish happened to pass through the dining-room when Harry and his wife were finishing dinner, and catching sight of them he turned off toward their table.

He was a brisk, smallish man, and Cynthia was astonished by his aspect. She had seen him often enough upon the floor of the House of Commons, and had taken him for a person of a commanding height. But it was not the first time she had made this mistake. The House of Commons, like the theatre, magnifies men to the galleries. Mr. Devenish dropped his hand upon Rames's shoulder.

"I want a word with you to-night, Rames," he said.

"Why not now?" asked Rames. "This is my wife, Mr. Devenish."

Mr. Devenish bowed to her.

"I knew that very well," he said.

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Cynthia disbelieved him. Also she had formed a dislike of him. There was something too acrid in his speeches. She thought of him as a man going about with a phial of vitriol hidden in the palm of his hand.

"I am not famous," she said coldly. "How should you know, Mr. Devenish?"

"I saw you in the lobby, and—I asked"; he smiled as he spoke, and she found his smile singularly disarming; it was so friendly and genuine a thing. Mr. Devenish turned again to Harry Rames.

"We want you to help us. A vote on account for the navy is coming up on Thursday. There will be a motion for the reduction of armaments. We want you to speak."

Harry Rames shook his head.

"I rather propose to leave those questions alone. I don't want to get the reputation of being a service member."

"I appreciate that," said Mr. Devenish. "But you are asked to speak in this debate by the government."

"On the general question?" asked Rames.

"Not so much on that. The point is the economy of the big ship. You can speak from practical experience. You know. You are here in Parliament to contribute your knowledge." Mr. Devenish turned to Cynthia, and again his smile illumined his face. "Persuade him, Mrs. Rames."

It occurred to Cynthia that Mr. Devenish did not trouble to inquire whether Harry Rames believed the big ship to be an economical thing. Harry was to support the government. The rest of his argument she agreed with. It was Harry's duty, since he was in Parliament, to contribute of his knowledge.

"Very well," said Captain Rames. "Of course if the government wishes it, I shall be proud to take part in the debate. Won't you sit down and have some coffee?"

"Yes, do!" said Cynthia cordially, and she was not altogether engaged in helping her husband on when she spoke. Mr. Devenish now puzzled her. She had begun by disliking him. He had spoken very few words to her, and yet she no longer disliked him. There was a charm in his manner of which he seemed quiet unaware. At close quarters he lost the narrowness, which she had thought the mark of him. He seemed broadly human, comprehensively sympathetic. Yet he obviously wore no mask. He was simple, and he gave a pleasant impression of being a good fighter. Mr. Devenish drew up a chair and sat down.

"You come to many of our debates," he said to Cynthia. "What do you think of us?" and with an unaffected interest in the views of a pretty woman, he led her on to express her opinion.

"Well," she said frankly, "I think most of your debates are very dull."

"That's quite true," Mr. Devenish replied with a laugh at the little spurt of complaint in her voice. "Nine out of ten are dull, and if you were in the government you would wish the tenth was too. The debate which sparkles and amuses you in the gallery means keen opposition on the floor of the House. The debate which is dull means that the government gets its bill. And the government is there to get its bills."

"Yes, I suppose that's true," said Cynthia, and then, Harry Rames intervened.

"It's curious," he said, "but I no longer find any debate dull. I used to be bored, I admit it, but I can sit through anything now and find it interesting."

"Yes," said Cynthia, nodding her head; "I have noticed that, Harry, from the gallery, and—I think it's a bad sign."

"The sign of the true Parliamentarian," said Mr. Devenish.

"Perhaps," said Cynthia stubbornly. "Still a bad one."

"Now why?" asked Mr. Devenish indulgently. Cynthia was certainly a very pretty woman. Let her talk! Cynthia colored and replied hotly:

"Because it means that the four walls of that little chamber are closing in on you. The game inside, with its pauses, its delays, its coups, its intricacies and manœuvres, is becoming more important than the great interests and issues outside which you are there to decide. It means that in your thoughts the country and the constituency are growing smaller, and the green leather benches on which you sit becoming more and more important. If you don't find any debates dull, you are growing aloof from the country. You are becoming, as you say, a Parliamentarian. That means Parliament first, the country a bad second."

Cynthia stopped abruptly. She had allowed herself to be betrayed into delivering

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a lecture upon politics to a past-master in the art, a man who, out of his forty-eight years, had spent twenty in the House of Commons. She flushed. "But you must think me a fool," she cried.

"I don't," Mr. Devenish exclaimed. "Yours is a definite point of view." He was now speaking seriously. For he was eager to learn so long as the learning came to him by word of mouth, and not from the printed page. "Tell me some more."

He was considering no longer the prettiness of the woman, the changing lights upon her face. He was conceding respect to her judgment. Cynthia was mollified. She continued:

"And here's something which to me makes many of the debates tedious and unreal. You all behave as if your ideal of a member of the House of Commons were a fossil on a shelf."

Mr. Devenish laughed.

"Why do you say that, Mrs. Rames?"

"Because if a man changes his opinions ever so little during a course of years, he at once has the reports of his old speeches flung at his head in scathing accents, as though he had committed the meanest of crimes."

"It's a party score," said Mr. Devenish.

"Yes, but why?". Cynthia insisted. "You must all know that a man who is any use at all, does change his opinions as his experience widens. Surely that's true. What's the use of thought at all if it leaves you precisely where you were?"

"Mrs. Rames," said Mr. Devenish, "I cannot dispute it."

Cynthia had long been puzzled by this extraordinary childishness on the part of men of reputed intelligence. She was determined if she could to get at the truth. "Then why?" she asked. "Why, when one of the opposition proves that a member of the government has changed his view, does all the opposition shout with derision, and why do all on the government side look glum? Why must the minister labor to show that he really hasn't changed any views? Why does he rise so quickly to do it? And why, when he has risen, doesn't he say: 'Of course I have changed my views. I am a better man than I was two years ago.'"

"Well, upon my word, I can't tell you why," said Mr. Devenish honestly. "I suppose we haven't the courage. Don't you approve of us at all?"

"Oh, yes, I do," said Cynthia quickly; "and much more than I expected to do." She was induced to give her impression of the body of members.

"I had got an idea that everybody was in here to get something." She grew suddenly red, and in a flurry, which Mr. Devenish did not understand, she continued, "I suppose I got the idea from newspapers. I made a wrong inference. They are here, of course—the rich men who want honors to put a crown upon their wealth, the office-hunters, the speculator and the financier, who use their membership to help their city business. But there are others one is apt to overlook, the silent people, who make no mark, and don't want to make one. You see them in the lobby, rather disconsolately busy about nothing. They are probably not particularly intelligent. Some of them, no doubt, are quite stupid. But one rather respects them, because membership of the House of Commons means to them a real daily loss. They would be more prosperous if they devoted the time they spend here to their business. But they seem to be here because they believe that some things want doing, some definite things, and that they can help to get them done by their votes. There is a lot of them. Then there are the country gentlemen who would be much happier on their estates, and would be there but for their conviction that the solid judgment of the country gentleman is absolutely necessary in the council of the nation." She spoke with pomposity and a friendly mimicry of the class she described. "But I like them. I think they are of value because to them, too, membership here means a real loss."

"Well, I agree," said Mr. Devenish.

"You! You do?" asked Cynthia in surprise. "I thought that—" and she stopped.

"Well, what?" Mr. Devenish pressed for her opinion with a laugh.

"Never mind," said Cynthia. "There's another class, too, which attracts me. The failures. The ambitious men who just don't succeed, and fail by so very little, but fail completely."

"Yes," Mr. Devenish agreed, "their lot is not attractive. They can't bring themselves to admit failure. They drift along

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here until the time is past for them to do anything else. The four walls, as you say, have closed about them. They sit here, eating out their hearts, jealous of the others who succeed, and making a bitter pretence of contentment."

"They are the prisoners of the House of Commons," said Cynthia, and the phrase struck pleasantly upon Mr. Devenish's ears, so used to the slipshod metaphors of the average speaker.

"Yes," he said with a quick look of interest. "Yes, that's a true saying. How did you think of it, Mrs. Rames?"

"I have sympathy with failures," she replied.

"Ah," said Mr. Devenish. "But it's easy to have that when one is married to success," and he turned genially to Captain Rames.

A junior whip hurried up to the table.

"You are wanted, Mr. Devenish, in the House," he said.

Devenish looked at his watch and sprang up. "I have stayed longer than I ought to. We can count upon you then, Rames, for Thursday," and he hurried away. Cynthia followed him with her eyes. He attracted her and he left with her an impression of power, which made his interest in her, obviously expressed, a subtle flattery. She turned back to her husband.

"I was mistaken in that man," she said, and as Harry Rames did not answer her, she continued: "You see, Harry, I am doing my best to help you on."

"You are indeed," said Harry Rames sulkily. Cynthia stared at him. The sulkiness in his voice set her blood tingling. He could be jealous then! She laughed out loud suddenly, with a girl's joyousness, and, as Harry lifted inquiring eyes to her, the blood mantled into her cheeks, and she sat in a pretty confusion. For a moment both of them were embarrassed, and neither could have told why. Cynthia broke through the embarrassment with the first words which occurred to her:

"I can't reconcile Mr. Devenish with his speeches," she said.

"Yet there's a continuity," replied Harry. "He is one of your instances of men big enough to widen out. But he's an enthusiast, and he has done in his day a deal of platform work so that the old phrases come trippingly to his tongue. He says, when he's carried away, more than he thinks now, but less than he used to think two years ago. I fancy that's the explanation."

Cynthia looked toward the door through which Mr. Devenish had disappeared.

"Tell me about him, Harry," she said.

"I will certainly," said Rames. His ill-humor had passed. He leaned toward his wife with a smile upon his face. It seemed to Cynthia that the moment of embarrassment so quickly gone had brought now as its consequence another moment quite as inexplicable—a moment during which she and Harry were nearer to one another than as yet they had been.

"The one thing I think to remember about Devenish is this," Rames continued. "As a boy he had always to walk in the road and he has not forgotten it."

The division bell began to ring before he could say another word to elaborate his sketch of the man. He led Cynthia out through the arches to the door where her carriage waited, and he left her to drive home puzzled by his phrase.

He spoke, as he had promised to do, on the following Thursday. Cynthia heard the speech from the ladies' gallery, not siding with it at all, nor against it, but simply attentive to its effect. He rose in a full House, which did not diminish as he spoke, and the space behind the bar grew crowded. He was short; he worked his own intimate knowledge of the mechanism of a modern ship of war into the scheme of his speech. He was nervous, Cynthia knew, but he gave no outward sign of nervousness; he spoke with a quiet resonance of voice, as though he had the measure of that assembly; and he brought into play that remarkable gift of counterfeiting sincerity, which always astonished, and sometimes frightened her. It was difficult even for her to realize that he had no real opinion about the value of the big ship, one way or the other, and that he had merely crammed his subject diligently with her help during the last few days. He spoke indeed, with telling effect. There were friends of Cynthia in the gallery who were quick to congratulate her. She herself was filled with admiration, but it was the admiration for the fine performance of an actor; and when she went down in the lift to join him after the debate was over, the

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cry was loud in her heart: "If only he believed one word of it!"

He met her at the gate of the lift, and she caught his arm and pressed it against her side.

"Thank you," said Harry. "That's better than words."

"It wasn't a congratulation," she replied. "It was an appeal."

Harry Rames spoke once more during that sessoin, late at night, in a thin House, and to try himself in unprepared debate, rather than with any intention to arrest notice. But the moment was well chosen, for a speaker on the government side was needed; and when the House rose for the autumn, he took down with him to Warwickshire the reputation of a rising man. He had kept his bargain, Cynthia gratefully acknowledged it, and the fears which Isaac Benoliel had aroused in her began for a time to lose their substance.

XXIV

THE MAN WHO HAD WALKED IN THE ROAD

Harry Rames and Cynthia passed the autumn at the white house, and hardly a day passed but one or the other was seen in the climbing streets of Ludsey. Harry presided at the social gatherings of the city, the musical clubs, the horticultural society, and the rest. He was busy with his town clerk over a railway bill which the municipality meant to oppose. He made friends with his public opponents. Cynthia herself was hardly less active. She threw herself into the work of committees and councils, not from enthusiasm, but in a desperate search for that color which Mr. Arnall and his fellows had got from politics, and her own youth demanded for herself. And with the work, interest in it came, if color did not. They were establishing Harry Rames in his seat—that was certain, and she had her share in. They were winning and, being a woman, she loved to win. Cynthia was a success in Ludsey—she could not but know it. For the demands for her presence and her time grew with every morning's post. There came to her a sort of exultation of battle. She was doing her work; she was helping to make the great career, and in the pleasure of helping to make, she lost sight of the essential emptiness of the things he was making.

"Yes," said Harry one night to her. "You are making this seat safe for me, Cynthia, for the next election."

Cynthia looked at him with her eyes bright.

"Do you think so?" she asked eagerly, asking for praise, and Arthur Pynes, the young chairman of the association, who had been dining with them, corroborated her husband.

"We once had a candidate whose wife would sing at the public meetings. We couldn't stop her, and it was calculated that every time she sang she cost us fifty votes. We have always stipulated for a bachelor since. But you have changed our views now, Mrs. Rames."

"I am very glad," said Cynthia; and the trio fell to discussing plans for the next session. "We want to see you in office before three years are out," said Pynes to Harry Rames. "There's no reason why we shouldn't."

"Yes, there is," said Harry Rames. "A large majority. They want you to keep quiet and vote and, being strong, they would just as soon put into office men who have never opened their mouths in the House as not, and probably sooner."

"Then you must force 'em," said Arthur Pynes.

They discussed the government programme for the next session, and what opportunities would arise from it. But the changes and transitions of Parliament are rapid. However sternly the government may cling to its ordered sequence of legislation, great questions will arise which have not been foreseen, and the ballot will give to private members their opportunity of discord. Thus the man who sits next to you may be in hot debate with you to-morrow, and those who smiled at you from the treasury bench yesterday may see you stroll with a fine air of indifference into the opposition lobby to-day. Harry Rames was well aware of the pull of the undercurrents, but neither he nor Cynthia, nor Arthur Pynes had a suspicion that night that the next session was to see him in definite antagonism to Devenish, the man who had been forced to walk in the road.

It was not, indeed, until the session was more than half-way through that Cynthia

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herself learnt it. She had dined with her husband at the House. It was a warm night of early summer, and after dinner they took their coffee upon the terrace. A private bill was occupying the attention of a thin House, and the terrace was fairly full of members waiting for the resumption of public business. Amongst them was Mr. Devenish. He strolled up to the couple, and after shaking hands with Cynthia, turned to Harry Rames:

"I hear you are against Fanshawe's bill."

"Yes," said Harry Rames.

"It comes on next Friday," continued Devenish. "The government will accept the principle, and give the bill a second reading."

"It won't go further than that," said Harry Rames.

"Not this year. But next year we shall embody the principle in a measure of our own, and then—?" He looked inquiringly at Harry.

"Then," said Harry deliberately, "I suppose we must try to get it amended."

A beam of light pouring from one of the windows showed Devenish's face clearly to Cynthia. She saw it harden and narrow. When he spoke his voice was sharp.

"I shall be in charge," he said. "I shall not accept any amendment which strikes at the principle."

"I am sorry," said Rames. He lit his cigar. He had not the air of a man receding from his position.

Cynthia was leaning forward, her eyes travelling curiously from one to the other. She had noticed the quick snap in the voice of Devenish, the quiet indifference to it in her husband's. But she did not know on what point they disagreed. Harry Rames turned toward her and explained:

"Fanshawe is bringing in a land bill on Friday afternoon. I didn't think that the government would take it up or I would have told you about it, Cynthia, and talked it over with you."

Devenish looked quickly toward the girl. Since Rames consulted her, could he enlist her upon his side? Cynthia read the unspoken question in his face, and turned gratefully to her husband who had made it clear that she had her word in his decisions.

"Fanshawe proposes that the State should buy compulsorily so much land at intervals of so many years, split it into small holdings and lease them," Rames continued.

"And you disapprove?" said Cynthia.

"Yes. I am against the small holding. I think that's waste. I am in favor of the small farm. But I want the farm owned, not taken on lease. That's my chief objection. The State's a hard landlord."

"Is a bank a better one?" asked Devenish.

"I think so," returned Rames. "A bank's a business; the State's a machine. There's a big difference there."

"Well, I shall be interested to hear what you have to say on Friday," said Devenish, as he rose from his chair. "It would be a pity if we lost your support—a great pity." He spoke with a slow significance. The words were half a compliment, and the other half a menace. He turned at once lightly to Cynthia. "You must persuade him, Mrs. Rames, to be sensible, you really must," he said. "To create owners is a long, slow process, and I can't wait." A sudden violence flamed in his voice, and with a characteristic action he brought a clenched fist sharply down into the open palm of his other hand. He looked out across the Thames and leftward to the lights on Westminster bridge. He seemed to be assuring himself that he stood at last where he had always meant to stand, that the moment for which he had lived was surely coming. "No, I can't wait. I want to set about the land system in this country. With tenancies one can begin at once."

As he walked away from them Cynthia recalled the description of him which Harry Rames had given to her. "As a boy he had always to walk in the road, and he has not forgotten it." She understood the phrase now. Devenish's swift and bitter outburst had been an illumination.

He had been forced to walk in the road. Rames had shown a shrewd insight into a complex character when he coined the phrase. Devenish was the son of a small struggling tradesman, in a little town surrounded by land which was carefully preserved. Therefore he was chased out of the woods and off the grass. The gamekeeper was his enemy, and an enemy always at hand. To feel the turf beneath his feet he must use stealth like a criminal. He lived in a good grass country, and his share

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of it was the dust kicked up from the road by the wheels of carriages. In his boyhood he had brooded over his exclusion, and through the hard struggles of his youth his thoughts had been yellow with rancor. Now, it is true, the rancor had diminished. At the age of forty-eight he had reached high office, and with high office, for the first time, a regular and sufficient income. He was freed for a while, at all events, from the desperate endeavor to pay his way outside and keep his footing inside the House of Commons. He met men of diverse pursuits from the far corners of the earth. The world broadened out before him magically.

He entered late as it were upon his youth; the arts swept into his view, a glittering procession, and enchanted him. All was new to him as to a child. The natural charm of the man found an outlet; he had good-humor now, and a pleasant friendliness. Gradually the doors of great houses had been opened to him—and he had looked in. It was to his credit that he had only looked in. He had come away unspoilt, uncaptured. But though he recognized that for him the world had become wonderfully a place of amenities he had not forgotten that as a boy he had been forced to walk in the road; and the dust of it was still bitter in his mouth. "For others," he had said to himself, "it shall not be so," and he was in a hurry to set about the change. To create peasant proprietors? There was a world of obstacles in the way. To create tenants of the State; a single budget would suffice. Fanshawe's scheme should be the chief item in the government programme of next year, and Captain Rames must look to himself if he stood firm to oppose it.

Captain Rames, on his side, had no intention to give way. He drove away from the House that night with Cynthia, and in the carriage he said:

"I shall put up as big a fight as I can, Cynthia, on this question."

"Against Mr. Devenish?"

"Yes."

Cynthia was silent, and Harry Rames turned to her swiftly with a question upon his lips. "You think it rash?" he was going to ask, but he never did. He saw her eyes shining at him out of the darkness, and in a low tone she said:

"You feel very strongly about it, strongly enough to risk your future. Oh, I am so glad!"

There was a throb of joy in her voice. She was still a girl. Though she professed to laugh at the enchanted garden of her dreams, there was still some yearning for it at her heart. The men with ideas had peopled it. It seemed that after all her husband, since at all costs he meant to stand up against Mr. Devenish for an idea, must be one of them. But a slight, almost an uneasy gesture, which Harry made, stopped her on the threshold of a great happiness. She lay back, chilled with disappointment.

If Harry had spoken, he would have said: "No, I don't feel strongly about it. I don't feel about it at all. I simply recognize that it is my opportunity." And thus he would have spoken before their marriage, perhaps, too, during the first few weeks after it. But a change had inevitably come for both of them. The frankness which Rames had deliberately used, so that she might know him for what he was, no longer served. Always it had hurt Cynthia, even though she had welcomed it. More than once he had seen her flinch from it as from a blow. But now that they were so much together, a hint or silence had to take its place. Blunt honesty was all very well twice a week or so, but repeated every hour, it bruised too heavily. So, too, with Cynthia. Her business as a wife was to help, not chide. Their year of marriage had taught them the little diplomacies and managements which made life together possible for them. Frankness was to save them—so they had planned. What was saving them was reticence.

This time, however, Cynthia was told the truth by her husband's gesture. He was going to follow the old historic, dangerous road, the road of the third parties, the short cut to power which has lured so many ambitious men to disappointment, and advanced a very few before their time. And he had chosen William Devenish to tilt against, a man supple and quick in debate, sharp of tongue, with a gift of ridicule, and a wealth of language, a speaker who hit with a nice discrimination just above the belt in the House, and just a little bit lower outside of it. To Cynthia it seemed that Harry must be gambling on his success; that he had cast his prudence from him like

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a cloak. Harry Rames answered some part of her thought.

"It's not so mad as it appears to be," he said. "In the first place the question of tenancy against ownership is an open one. You are not breaking away from your party whatever view you take. You may be breaking away from a minister, but that's a different thing."

Cynthia's fears were assuaged. In her relief she turned eagerly to Rames.

"But your minister is Mr. Devenish," she cried.

"I know," he returned. "A hard fighter. All the more gain then, if I can stand square to him, and remain standing. Besides, Devenish has a peculiar weakness."

"Yes?" cried Cynthia. "You can make use of it?" and she stopped, wondering at herself. She was startled to realize that for the first time she herself was keeping his eyes from lifting to the high path above.

"I have noticed it," Rames continued. "He can stand any amount of opposition from his opponents. If he gets heated, he remains master of his wit and tongue. But he cannot endure criticism from the benches behind him. It strikes some hidden string of arrogance in him. He loses his control. He says foolish things. He hands himself over a victim, if his critic has courage and skill enough to use his chance."

"I see," said Cynthia. "And the third point?"

"Oh," said Harry carelessly. "The question is an important one for the country. It must provoke discussion. Yes, I shall move the rejection of Fanshawe's bill if I get the chance."

He put down on the notice paper with some twenty other members on the opposition side a motion for rejection. He rose on the Friday, immediately after Fanshawe had sat down, and was called upon by the Speaker. He was content with two objections. But either of them, if established, was fatal to the bill. He argued against the small holding, which he regarded as the pastime of the well-to-do tradesman in the neighboring town, rather than as a serious method of settling a genuine peasantry on the land; and he pleaded for the farm of sixty or seventy acres. It is a matter nowadays of ancient dispute, yet he managed to say a new thing about it, not parading his knowledge—for there were too many in that House who had made land the study of their lives—but suggesting it with a deference which took his audience. The great farm, he maintained, was a modern product, due to quite other causes than natural development. It came from the vanity of the eighteenth century, its love of spaciousness and show. The monstrous porticoed houses and the huge farms were the symbols of its parade. But in the seventeenth century, when agriculture really prospered, the small farm of seventy acres was the rule. It was at a return to this condition that policy and legislation ought to aim.

He passed to his second argument. Tenancy under the State was bad. For the State was a hard landlord, and could be nothing else. It took no account of bad seasons or the shortness of money. It had to collect its revenues and rents within the year. Moreover, the idea was petty in its conception. (Here Mr. Devenish turned an outraged head toward the orator.) Legislation should aim at something beyond the immediate benefit it conferred. Otherwise let them commit the fortunes of the country to a parish council, and themselves go home.

"There is to my mind one question by which all legislation can be tested," said Rames, "and that question is not: 'Does it supply an immediate need?' but 'Does it help to strengthen the character of the race?'"

The bill failed according to that test. For it meant no more than the substitution of one landlord for another, and left the tenant pretty much where he was. If Mr. Fanshawe had taken a bold course and produced a just measure, with the object of creating owners, then the bill would not have failed. For the desire to possess land was the surest sign of a sound and healthy race. It was that desire in men which good legislation would try to keep alive. This bill merely fobbed them off with a miserable makeshift, and shut the door against ownership. Ownership with its obligations and its responsibility, and its response to the most primal and most durable of all ambitions, was the only policy worthy of a great Parliament.

Mr. Devenish replied later in the afternoon, and quite briefly. He did not, he said, propose to enter into the discussion, but simply to state the intention of the gov-

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ernment. It would give the bill a second reading, accepting thus the two principles of small holdings and tenancies under the State; and next year it would introduce a measure of its own, based upon those principles, and press it through until it was placed upon the statute-book. Mr. Devenish studiously refrained from any reference to Captain Rames, and as soon as he sat down, the hands of the clock then pointing within a minute of five, Mr. Fanshawe moved the closure, and the Speaker accepted the motion. The closure was accepted without a division, and the main question was put.

In the interval, while the division bells were ringing, a slim, middle-aged man, with a mustache which was beginning to grow gray, and a handsome, ineffective face, passed into the House from the lobby, and took a seat on the bench by Rames's side.

"What are you going to do, Rames?" he asked.

"Vote as I spoke," said Harry.

"Then I'll go with you," said his companion. "I didn't hear your speech, or indeed anything of the debate. But I am sure Devenish is wrong."

Harry Rames laughed.

"That sounds like a good working rule. Thank you, Brook. Let us go and vote."

The two men, alone of their party, strolled into the opposition lobby, and that was the beginning of the great cave. It was a Friday afternoon, in summer, the weather was very hot, the House very thin, and Mr. Devenish and his under-secretary the only men present on the treasury bench. No one paid any attention to the revolt; the newspapers next day had the briefest reports of the debate. Cynthia herself, who had come to the House to listen to a fierce and tingling discussion, was disappointed at the gentle apathy which overlay the proceedings of that afternoon.

But Harry said: "Wait a little, Cynthia"; and Mr. Brook, who from that time began to drop in frequently at their house in Curzon Street, chuckled like a man with secret knowledge.

"Eight men on our side," Harry explained, "had met several times in one of the committee rooms before Friday, to decide what course they should take to resist this bill. I did not know of their meetings at the time, and they agreed to do nothing until they were sure of the line the government was going to take. Had they suspected that I was going to move the rejection of the bill, they would have attended and voted with me."

(To be continued.)

THE AWAKENING

By Sara Teasdale

TEN minutes in a crowded room
I sat beside the man I love.
We dared not meet each other's eyes
Lest we should read the light thereof.

There in the crowd we two alone
Came forth upon eternity;
Our souls were ships new launched at dawn
Upon an open sea.

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THE POINT OF VIEW

AN octogenarian American sage has lately declared that the chief and most discouraging change he notes in his countrymen from the time of his own youth is their greater and more imperative fondness for amusement. An American who is approaching what the newspapers would call "the sage class," though hitherto of "the magnate class," has delivered himself of an epigram to much the same effect in retorting upon an interviewer who had asked his explanation of the high cost of living, "You mean the cost of high living." And a recent British tourist expresses himself as standing aghast at the extravagance which he finds to characterize all classes of the Americans who used to boast that they had no classes!

Of "Circenses"

There can be little question of the extravagance, and as little that it is connected with the increasing desire for amusement. Taking as a basis the number of licenses for automobiles issued by the State of New York, estimating the average cost of the machine at one thousand five hundred dollars, and that ten per cent of the machines served some other purpose than that of amusement, as of business vehicles to doctors' wagons, it has been computed that the State of New York alone spends one hundred and fifty million dollars yearly in the mere luxury of "making itself like unto a wheel," and nearly as much more in the upkeep of the instruments of this luxury, say, "conservatively," twenty-five dollars each for every man, woman, and child in the commonwealth!

This is a sufficiently startling showing for a period which we are assured is one of general commercial depression. But it is less impressive to the eye than the huge provision which is making now for public amusements. One does not mean so much music and the drama, though our provision for these would have astonished our fathers and scandalized our grandparents. All of us have long departed from the point of view of the good Edmund Quincy, whose diary bears witness to the shamefaced satisfaction with which he saw his first play in Philadelphia, while at the same time declaring that he would oppose any attempt to transplant such an institution to his own Boston. As to the opera, the name of the "Academy of Music" in New York and in Philadelphia shows that, half a century ago, "society" would not have subscribed for an undissembled opera-house, while the serious and even Gothic architecture of the contemporaneous and synonymous institution in Brooklyn moved a ribald Manhattanese to remark that in building an academy of music the people of the City of Churches desired an edifice which, if not a church, should be as near as might be to a church, "where they could hold a religious revival if they wanted to, and a Shakespearean revival if they had to."

The expensiveness and gorgeousness of our homes of the spoken and the lyric drama are now getting to be an old story. Our latest and most conspicuous provision for amusement is for "circenses" quite in the Juvenalian sense, in which the satirist declares that the Roman people has abandoned its old care for politics and war and now cared only for "bread and the sports of the arena." New York, to be sure, is even now deploring the impending demolition, by reason of a lack of paying demand, of an edifice erected a quarter of a century ago, primarily for the exhibition of the now obsolescent horse; and refuses to be comforted except by the assurance that it will be succeeded by one even bigger. But the sports for which we are now making the most prodigal outlays are distinctly of the Olympian and even of the gladiatorial kind, "circenses" in the Juvenalian acceptation. The "grandstand" of the county fair of a generation ago—even the grandstand of the race-tracks of a decade ago, before an awakened sense of morality substituted bipedal for quadrupedal competitions of the arena, and left the race-tracks to decay and "suburban development"—was but a trifling matter compared with the monumental provision for sport made by the "stadia" which have sprung up in all the great cities. The hugest of these, up to date, is doubtless the Harvard stadium at Cambridge, and the vastness of it is socially suggestive as well as physi-

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cally impressive. Whoever saw it on the occasion of last November's Harvard-Yale foot-ball game, with every seat occupied, and even with provisional tiers of plank benches above the concrete of the substructure, was a witness to the change that has come over us within much less than a generation. The forty odd thousand it will hold are half as many as the Coliseum contained at its fullest; some say quite as many, for upon the "seating capacity" of the Roman amphitheatre it seems there is a schism among the antiquarians. At any rate, there were more people assembled to see the foot-ball game than there was provision anywhere in the United States for assembling, for any spectatorial purpose whatever, in the college days of the fathers of the competitors. It has to be owned that, with the "change in the rules," the contest was more Olympian and less Imperial-Roman than it would have been a few years ago; also that the modern virgins kept their thumbs in their muffs at the crises of the contest when they were not brandishing blue or crimson flags with them. But when you consider that the Harvard stadium, though the biggest, is not so much bigger than any of the like enclosures which every American town large enough to enter the inter-urban competition in baseball finds it necessary now to maintain, it is plain the elderly American patriot in whose time Latin was compulsory can read a fresh meaning into the jeremiad of the Roman satirist:

> Nam qui dabat olim
> Imperium, fasces, legiones, omnia, nunc se
> Continet, atque duas tantum res anxius optat,
> Panem et Circenses.

DID you ever happen to hear that if a stick is held up in front of a flock of sheep and the leader jumps over it, the remainder of the flock will jump over the place where the stick was, even after it is withdrawn? I never tried this, but I have been told by sheep-wise folk that it is true, and it has given me much food for thought as I have ruminated on our fads, intellectual, æsthetic, and other. Our mental kinship with the flock was too early pointed out in holy writ to be disputed now. I wonder if a picture of this sheep scene would not make a better national emblem than our proud and independent American eagle, who looks as if he did his own thinking, and hence is no longer a fitting symbol for us. Was there ever a country wherein people were so afraid of not doing as the others do? To be convicted of not having achieved the latest admiration is to have failed utterly in life. Surely most of the stout ladies who puff and pant after the nimble spirituality of the Hindoos are more conscious of the pace of their travelling companions than of the goal. A study of the best sellers and of the books most in demand may well cause misgiving as to the depth of our intellectual preoccupations. How many of the people who plod through William De Morgan's novels have, in reality, the slightest appreciation of the special flavor of his work, with its rendering of old days and old ways and forgotten humors? The æsthetic manifestations of our jumping in unison are more absurd than the literary. Hob-minded Mrs. Blowsabella with the single flower in the slender vase, after the Japanese fashion, makes one smile, as does the passion of the stodgy, athletic young for Botticelli. It is only a step nowadays from Oil City to the heart of pre-Raphaelitism, but I must not deride; there may be cases where the enthusiasm is genuine. Besides, there is no use in trying to establish that which is too self-evident to need proof.

The Apotheosis of the Commonplace

The special phases of our imitativeness which worry me, as I meditate on the inevitable steps by which the conventional becomes the commonplace, are those which concern the young. I happen to have something to do with college girls, and in watching them see much of the world at large and the way it tends. If I may return to my rustic figure, you can always tell in which direction the sheep are from the way in which the lambs are running, and the lambs are all running the same way, alarmingly the same way. I shudder for the future, knowing the vigor wherewith new generations carry on the blunders of the old. Why is there so little individuality in their tastes as to hats, hose, slang, fiction, social ideals, art, literature, and cosmic philosophy? One would think that education, if the pleasant meaning of the word *educere* holds in its implication of drawing forth individual characteristics, would result in a certain differentiation. Not so! To go back again to our sheep, *educit* here simply means that the leader wins them all to jump over the same stick, or the place where the stick was.

The tame, unanimous adoption of one ugly fashion after another by our supposedly cultivated undergraduates dismays one. We have lived down the marcel wave; we are living down the pompadour; what can help us in living down the puffs? Did you ever try to lecture

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to seventy-five pompadours? Did you ever try to make an idea penetrate a marcel wave? Never have I envied any outgrown privilege as I have envied that old-time power of the masters of Oxford to carry great scissors about with them that they might seize and clip the locks of any students whose style of hair-dressing displeased them. The fashions in intellectual and sociological judgments, in literary and æsthetic tastes are quite as contagious and as irresistible as are those in clothing, in ways of walking, of shaking hands. I know that all this has its good side, and that the spirit of comradeship is strong in it; doubtless I ought to look upon this broad, ridiculous fillet that most of them are wearing, and that gives my class-room the appearance of an assemblage of broken and bandaged heads, as a symbol of the tie that binds maiden to maiden. Yet I cannot help deploring this crude conventionality among the young, this fear of individuality, this passion for the commonplace. Perhaps they adore it because it is the only thing of which there is enough to go around, and I admit that they are generous. It seems to me to threaten all distinction in character, in manner, and in achievement. Most of these girls want to be alike; they object to being more gifted, more honored, more distinguished than their fellows. I knew one of rare artistic gift who shamefacedly concealed it, refused to develop it, because it made her different from her fellows, and at last, little pagan though she was—pagan in origin, in conviction, with a paganism that gave peculiar skill to those deft fingers when they touched clay—she went into college settlement work because, just then, all the lambs were jumping that way. That rare power through which she might have grown to express herself in her own fashion has never emerged.

It is borne in upon me that the young, in their conscious and their unconscious endeavor to strike the law of averages, are making a great mistake; that individual gift or power, encouraged, developed, given a chance, will, in some cases surely, through its higher reach, its farther grasp, serve the mass more than will the immediate sacrifice for alleged immediate need. One who can help in levelling up may, it is conceivable, be worth a hundred who can help only in levelling down. One hears through all this girlish chatter the groundswell of our democracy, but I venture to say, even at the risk of insulting our most ostentatious ideals, that its murmur suggests danger. Even the early Christians, who had all things in common, confined their share and share alike to material things, and did not consider it wrong to possess a few individual inner characteristics. Many of our undergraduates have long ago given up all claim to their own clothing. Does it mean progress for the world if they no longer dare to call their souls their own?

MORE than one hundred years have passed since Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy walked from Eusemere, by the side of Ullswater, to their cottage home at Grasmere.

The outstanding scene of that memorable walk was taken in all its living beauty, and, by the witchery of words, forever visualized. It was Dorothy, who, in her diary, first gave expression to that vision of the daffodils which was afterward moulded into poetic form by her brother: Dorothy whose sensibility was as delicate and responsive to the faintest suggestion of beauty as the daffodils to the gentlest breeze that played upon them from the lake. She had in quite as remarkable degree as her brother that power of intense visualization which is essential to a writer who would convey undimmed his vision to his readers. And our estimation of Wordsworth is heightened by his unequivocal and whole-hearted acknowledgment of his indebtedness to his sister in such lines as:

Wordsworth's Daffodils

> "She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
> And humble cares, and delicate fears;
> A heart, the fountain of sweet tears,
> And love and thought and joy."

Dorothy's description should be read before the poem, for her phrasing is incorporated in it.

"When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park, we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more; and at last under the boughs of the trees we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and above them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness, and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them

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from the lake, they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing. The wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot, and a few stragglers higher up, but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity, unity, and life of the one busy highway." It is interesting to notice the transition from Dorothy's metaphor of a "busy highway" to the "milky way" of the finished poem; and we must confess a preference for the color and emotion of Dorothy's busy, golden highway.

Wordsworth uses the words toss and dance, but omits the word reel so suggestive of stronger movement. Together we have a charming picture of the fitful and varying strength of a spring wind. Its moods are repeated and made visible, as well as felt, by the joyous mockery of the daffodils as they flutter and dance, or toss and reel, as the wind blows gently or fiercely. This gladsome pulsation of spring is felt by the brother and sister, and entering into the mood with elemental glee Wordsworth exclaims:

> "A poet could not but be gay
> In such a jocund company."

We can imagine Dorothy's vivid recital of this spring idyll to Mrs. Wordsworth, for she catches the spirit of the scene as is evidenced by the couplet:

> "They flash upon that inward eye
> Which is the bliss of solitude."

which is her contribution to the poem and is its final analysis. Indeed Wordsworth said "The two best lines in it are by Mrs. Wordsworth."

We wonder if they had any conception of the innumerable company who, looking upon this word-picture, would be transported to the shores of Ullswater, and with them rapt worshippers of nature's lore, see the daffodils fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Still each spring that highway of gold renews itself. Still the waves come dancing across the lake from under Place Fell, whose bracken-covered slope glows like fire and advances as the sunlight floods it, or turns to purple and recedes as a blue shadow lingers upon it and the daffodils dance as merrily for the chance traveller as they did for Wordsworth and Dorothy. In March or April he may still wander "lonely as a cloud"; for there has been little increase in the population of the vale. If he looks in Gowbarrow Park he will see the "little colony" and realize the beauty of Dorothy's thought as to the mystery of their coming, for they are as isolated as were the passengers of the Mayflower when the sea "floated them ashore"; and he must walk a considerable distance beyond Gowbarrow Park to Glencoin Park before the highway of gold will break upon his view. But, however far he walk and however long his quest, the finding of that pure gold will bring him as much wealth as it brought Wordsworth and Dorothy.

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THE FIELD OF ART

THE ARMORER AND HIS ART

THE loan collection of ancient European armor and arms recently exhibited in New York at the Metropolitan Museum of Art had unusual interest in many ways. It had, in the first place, an interest from an historical stand-point uncommon in gatherings of art objects; it had a great *allure*, for it showed files of knightly figures, with a setting of gothic tapestries and ancient banners, with a foreground of equestrian panoplied figures. Then, too, it represented the best objects from nearly every American collection, and it was the first and only exhibition of its kind on this hemisphere. In point of fact, there are not many private collections in this field at the best—a state of affairs which is eminently satisfactory to present collectors, for so rare are these objects that the appearance of a single new competitor is apt to mean care and privation to each of the rest.

In an exhibition of this kind a visitor is apt to be interested at first less in the art of the armorer than in the practical question of how armor could ever have been worn. It was certainly heavy. A suit weighed fifty pounds or more; sometimes the head-piece alone, in the case of a helm for tilting, might weigh thirty pounds. [See page 360.] And it was evidently uncomfortable—"a rich armor worn in heat of day that scalds with safety," wrote Shakespeare, who probably knew his theme at first hand. In fact, a complete harness must have been stuffy enough on a summer's day, but we can safely say it was not as hot as one imagines, for the polished surface reflected the heat, just as a bright andiron remains cool in front of a fire. Doubtless, too, it was cold in winter; but the metal surfaces were not in contact with the wearer—heavy buff leather or padded garments stood between—these mainly, though, for the purpose of deadening the actual shock of arms. A surprising thing is that the men who wore armor were generally not of heroic but of small size. This, I think, is admitted, though not without an occasional protest. Thus, Lord Dillon, curator of the Tower armories, notes that parts of the armor can be lengthened or shortened, depending upon how they are mounted, so that a suit apparently for a short man may have served for a man of average size. In my own experience, I must nevertheless conclude the average size of harnesses is small, even when their adjustability is taken into account. Of twenty odd suits I have in mind, only one is large enough to have fitted a man of five feet ten, who weighed two hundred pounds. Especially small were the heads. There are, for example, in my collection six casques dating from the fifteenth century: They are so little that they will hardly go over a head of average size. Their wearers must, therefore, have had singularly small crania, for between casque and head heavy padding was worn as a protection from shock. It is difficult to believe that these six casques are exceptions in size, and they could hardly have been prepared for children, for such juvenile pieces are excessively rare, so large a number—half a dozen—occurring only in a few national collections.

In a general way it is disappointing to find that the real lesson of such an exhibition—that is, the art of the armorer—is not well appreciated. But there are few, even among art lovers, who have any real conception of the armorer's art. To make beautiful armor was not his art, nor even to make a complete protection for the wearer—it was to make both at one and the same time. Never was a harness to be made beautiful at the expense of strength, completeness, and flexibility; never was it to be made strong at the expense of graceful lines and surfaces, nor to be made heavier by an ounce than practical tests demanded. This many people recognize in a way, though probably few could explain why, when they admire more than all the rest the simple, often undecorated harnesses of the fifteenth century, the gothic armor, which marked the climax in the work of the European armorer. The lines of these suits are admired—their slender waists, the defences for the arms and legs, formed as though they were moulded over living limbs. But the quality of the metal is not recognized, nor its hardness, its elasticity, nor the lightness of its plates whose thickness is graduated in such a way that little metal remained where it was not actually needed for protection.

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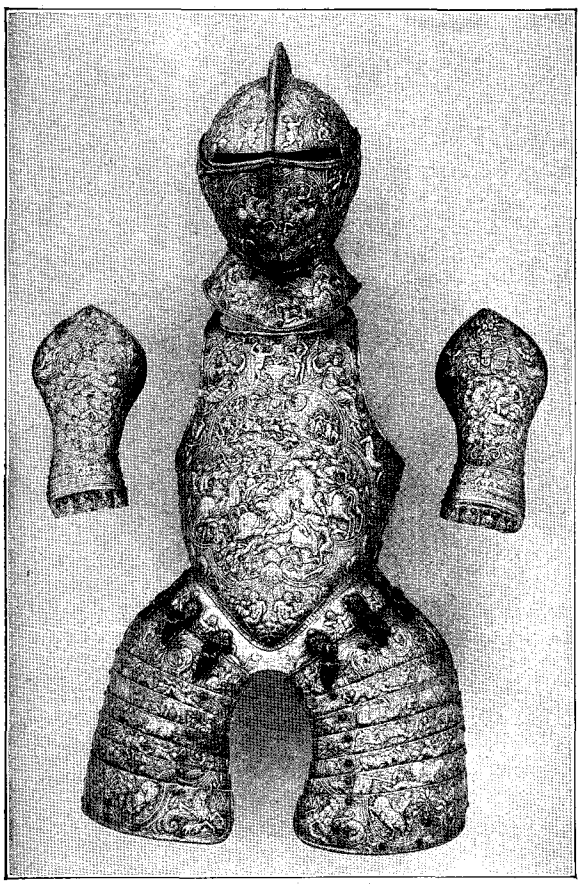
There is a splendid virility in these early harnesses which date from the times when gunpowder had not yet cheapened the quality of the metal, in making metal of costly make little better than common iron in heavier plates. In those days the armorer fashioned his plates *à grands coups*, and knew intimately where, when, and to what degree his strokes would tell. He knew just the point of redness when the heated metal was most malleable; he saw to it that his hammers and anvils—he had many kinds, perhaps a couple of hundred kinds of hammers and as many as fifty anvils—should be of brilliant cleanness, so that rust should not cling to the beaten metal and cause its fibres to be crushed instead of spread out elastically on all sides. He had the "seeing eye" of his craft; he knew just how much metal could be used in a given spot, how far it should go and how thick it would be when it reached its destination, in the numberless "pushings" of the metal from point to point. He would have surprised a modern if he could have shown him the shape and thickness of a piece of armor in its early formative stages. Thus he might point out that the future tall comb, or crest, of an Italian casque in the flat was in the centre of a plate of metal, perhaps two or three feet in diameter, circular in outline, and he could show how, step by step, this crest came into being—how the disk was first converted into a huge saucer-shaped bowl, which gave little promise of the future casque—how the metal was then pressed down in a median line, always spread gradually and with infinite patience from the margins toward the centre—how stroke by stroke the trench thus begun would "grow" deep and long and narrow, thickest below, strong everywhere, pushed constantly deeper until finally, viewed from the other side, it would appear as a helmet comb, rounded and tall, perhaps five inches high. Such a labor, an armorer would point out, could be much simplified if the remainder of the casque had not to be formed at the same time and out of the same piece of metal, for in forming the crest he was apt to weaken some other part of the casque, sometimes distant, by not leaving metal enough or by having to spread out the metal to the danger point. In a word, he would make it clear that he was displaying art and craft with individual skill, but in accordance with definite laws which dated with him from his apprenticeship, but which, clearly enough, were in essence old—old in the experience of armorers whose generations extended backward in an unbroken chain as far even as the age of bronze.



Embossed armor of German workmanship, about 1590.
From the Stuyvesant collection.

The armorer had unquestionably a magnificent pride in his work. His art was living and he left his sign manual in the very strokes of his hammer which one sees to-day, unfiled, patinated with age, but crisp and deep, on the "wrong side" of bits of armor dating from the great period (fifteenth century); and he would

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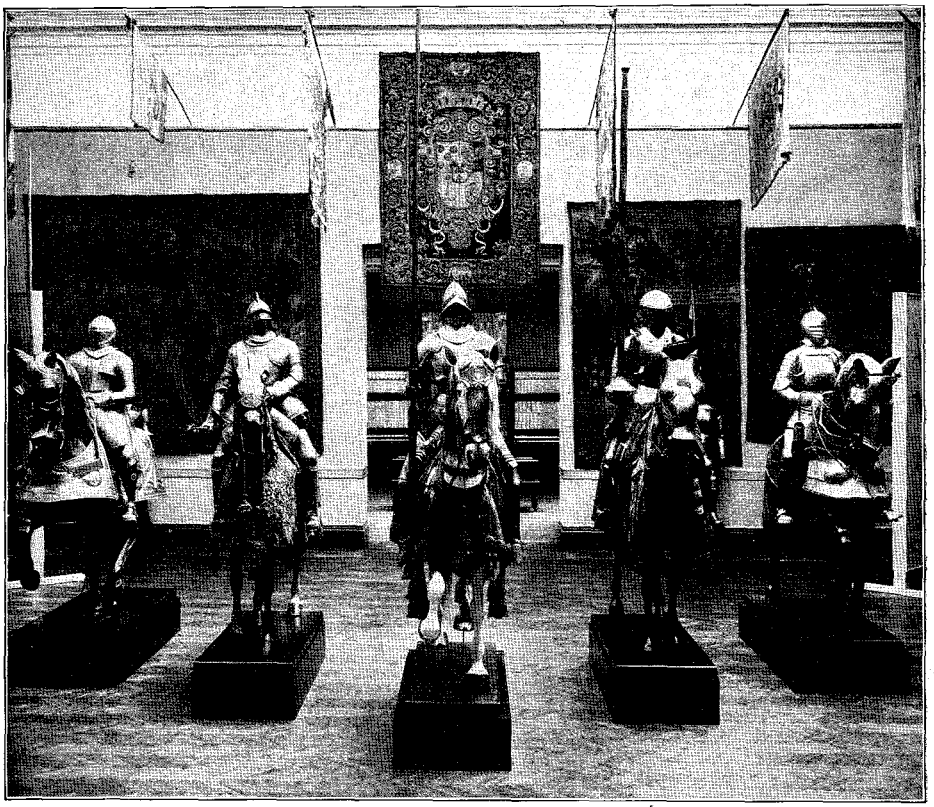

Armor for man and horse.

Shown in the loan exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

doubtless agree with a modern visitor to a museum who asked that a certain gothic salade should be so exhibited that the inside could be seen more readily than the outside. This pride of the armorer is seen in his care to sign his pieces, and in the sober traditions followed, when he caused them to be marked by family or guild in particular places and in particular positions. Thus, given a casque of a certain type and quality, we look at once at a certain point on its surface to find the *poinçon* of its maker in the form of initials or of some trade-symbol, like the keys of the Milanese Missaglia (or of their successors, the Negroli), the helm of the Helmschmied, or the clover-leaf of the Tretyz. Or, in the case of a plastron, on a spot near the collar, or on an elbow guard on the upper inner margin, or in a gauntlet at a definite spot on the cuff. There was the same care and custom in this as in the signatures of painters.

But his great pride was in the results of his work. Its appearance was one thing—he was not amiss to having it duly admired—and we have records of the street of the armorers in Milan when harnesses for horse and man stood in lifelike poses down the street, from shop to shop, making a display for a festival which held the interest alike of peasant or prince. Those were days when the armorer was given the same artistic rank as sculptor or painter, when so great a stickler for precedence as Francis I gave Titian no greater honor than the Negroli, and when he ennobled his swordsmith, Serafino de Brescia. But the greatest satisfaction of the armorer could only have been when his work stood the test of use, when his patron came from the barriers with his harness unbroken. Certain it is that the artist armorer studied the results of his work. We can picture him at a joyous passage at arms, noting with critical eye how the blows of axe, lance, or sword tested his harness; how the head-piece withstood a downright blow of a heavy mace, because he had arched the dome of the casque expressly and strengthened its ridge, cunningly heaping the weight of the metal on the points most ex-

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posed and taking away the thickness wherever practicable, so that the total weight should least tire the wearer. Only after practical tests could he have discovered that in certain forms of combat supplemental or reinforcing plates should be used, and these he may have himself adjusted experimentally by the side of the tilt-yard when a critical moment came. And it was by similar observations that he studied the question how small the openings of a head-piece could be and yet admit ample air for the use of the panting wearer. It is, in fact, hardly too much to say that success in the armorer's art was the result of extensive and predetermined experiments. Not that the broken harnesses collected after a battle were not carefully observed, but that greater importance was given to details learned from the wearers themselves. This it was clearly which gave rise to a system of regular tests which came into use by individual artists and later by civic guilds, as described by the learned French archæologist, Charles Buttin. It is shown that each piece of armor when finished was actually shot at, apparently under specified conditions, *e. g.*, with a cross-bow of standard strength, and if the object withstood the test it was given the mark of proof, single or double or triple, as the case might be. At my hand stands a little closed helmet dating about 1480 which bears no less than four marks of proof, one on each cheek-piece and one on either side of the head. This evidently represented a high degree of refinement and specialization. After 1500 such testing marks became rare, and during the sixteenth century, when the quality of armor was poorer, they disappeared from use. In their place one sometimes sees at different points on corselet and head-piece the imprint of one or more bullets which were shot at the harness from a testing harquebus.

The fashion of making armor after the ancient rules is not altogether extinct. There are artists to-day who can copy more or less accurately mediæval pieces—a fact which every collector had learned to his cost. But it is safe to say that there is no piece of spurious armor which is not sooner or later detected. In modern forgeries (and in the "modern" are grouped all objects not of the period), in, say, a hundred instances, ninety are usually to be detected at first glance, the rest at closer inspection: in only two or three of these cases will an *expertise* require repeated examination and special technical treatment. It is difficult to say just in what detail the modern copyist (one need not use the term "forger," since the copyist may be honest—only after his work has passed through several hands it may become "authentic") makes his technical mistakes. Clearly these become the more obvious the more ambitious the task he tries. In general, though, the copies are stiff and lifeless; they do not give the impression of having been really worn; their material is "wrong," lacking the fibre and irregular laminations of ancient metal; their rust is modern; their color is apt to be leaden, and they do not convince one that their maker had made many more of the same kind. It was Baron de Cosson, one of the greatest scholars of everything which concerns armor, who said that the difference between the authentic piece and the forgery is to be sought in the *reasonableness* of the real one. Everything in the old object had its place and its meaning: every rivet had some purpose, every hook, every strap, every overlapping margin, every turn of a corner, every thickening of a plate.

The ancient armorer, then, was a man of distinction and his works were of an importance which few to-day are apt to appreciate. He was himself an artist and the peer of sculptors and painters, sometimes even their patron, for we read that of the greatest of them, Dürer, Michelangelo, Titian, Guilio Romano, Holbein, not to mention Peter Fischer, Juan de Bologna, and Cellini, contributed designs for weapons and harness, and that some of them even carried on the actual labor of etching and engraving them. This work, it appears, was usually done outside the ateliers of the armorer. It was realized, however, then as to-day, that decoration of this kind is really not the armorer's art—it is the art of the designer, etcher, engraver, goldsmith. And from this it follows that the armor which depends for its merit largely upon the work of its enrichment, as in cases of many specimens of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, is not the armor most prized by the real connoisseur. This is best appreciated, perhaps, if one may visit the collection of Mr. Riggs in Paris, and, compare, under expert guidance, the richly decorated harnesses of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with earlier armor of simpler lines and more careful modelling.

BASHFORD DEAN

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Drawn by F. C. Yohn.

"EF ANYTHING HAPPENS"—HE PAUSED, AND THE GIRL NODDED HER UNDERSTANDING—
"YOU AN' ME AIR GOIN' TO STAY HYEH IN THE MOUNTAINS
AN' GIT MARRIED."

—"The Heart of the Hills," page 392.

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